USA $12.99 EUROPE €11.99 UK £8.99 2014#1 WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

NEW IN CHESS

Russia wins World Teams (what relief!)

MVL on the Beijing Mind Games

What will happen to Lothar Schmid's library?

Hikaru Nakamura: 'I do feel that at the moment I am the biggest threat to Carlsen'

ISBN 978-90-5691-498-1

LONDON CHESS CLASSIC GOES RAPID ★ LAJOS PORTISCH A MATTER OF STYLE? ★ JUST CHECKING DANIEL KING

Ready for our next move?

Magazine

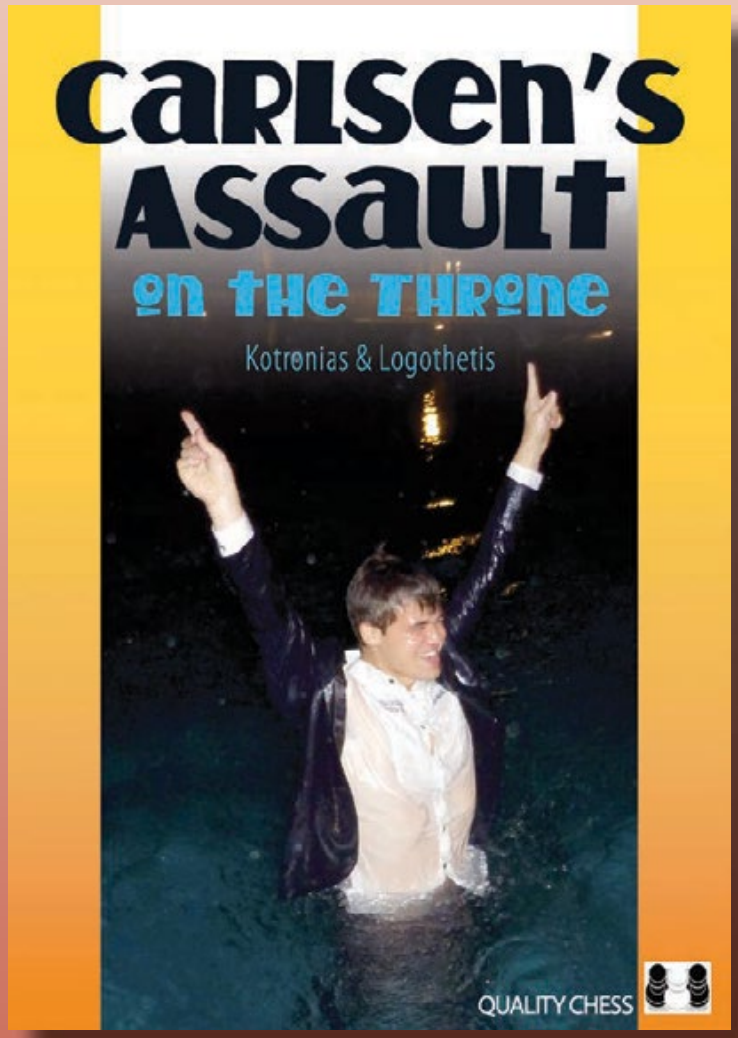
We have done it. The digital edition of New In Chess is there. You can now download it on your tablet and read all the stories immediately after publication. By simply tapping on the games you can replay the moves on the interactive chessviewer. So from now on you don't need a board and set to fully enjoy what top grandmasters have to say about their games! The New In Chess app installs in seconds, has all the right features and is easy to operate. To introduce New In Chess Digital we have made issue 2013#8 available as a FREE DOWNLOAD on your iPad. Move with us, go to the iTunes App store and tell us what you think. The Kindle Fire and Android editions will follow soon.

The only chess magazine that really moves

www.newinchess.com/digital

The ultimate book on the start of

The Carlsen Era



Carlsen's Assault on the Throne gives an inside view of Carlsen's dramatic journey: from one of eight challengers in **the London Candidates**, with the near disaster in the final rounds, ending with **triumph in Chennai**.

With **behind-the-scenes** stories and top-level analysis of the games, Kotronias & Logothetis have written **the ultimate book** on how Carlsen became the 16th undisputed World Champion.

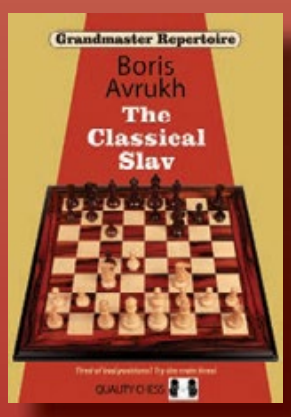
Vassilios Kotronias is a grandmaster and nine-time Greek Champion. He is a key member of the Greek team as both a player and coach.

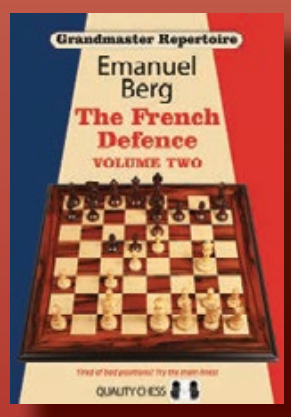
Sotiris Logothetis is a computer expert and highly-regarded arbiter and organizer.

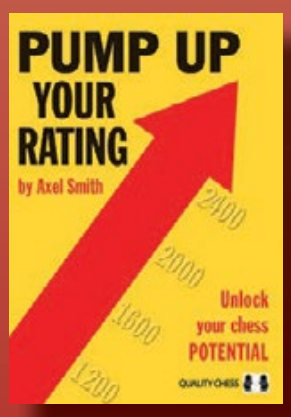
304 pages Hardcover €29.99
over 100 colour photos

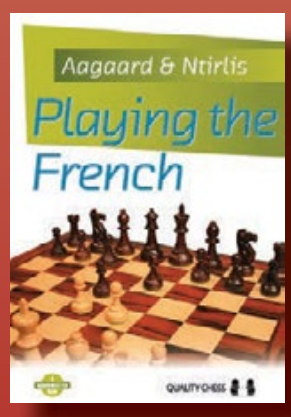
"Carlsen's Assault on the Throne is a quick and really excellent piece of work. Very impressive."
GM Karsten Müller

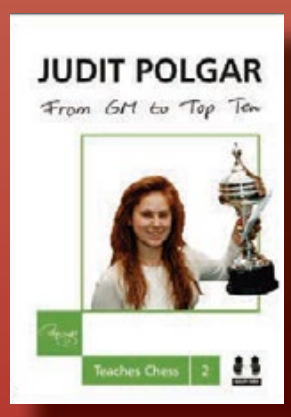
Other great new titles from Quality Chess











WWW.QUALITYCHESS.COM

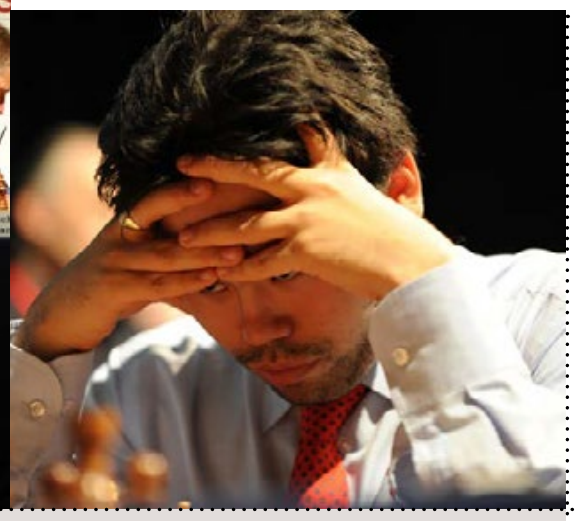
Looking for a fresh way to spoil the fun of Caro-Kann players?

Former Russian Champion Alexey Bezgodov advocates a very early deviation, the annoying and little-explored 3.f3. This move considerably complicates life for Caro-Kann players, as it makes Black's main problem bigger: the development of his bishop on c8. White's chances to obtain an advantage are substantial, as Bezgodov shows in this fascinating new chapter in modern opening theory, packed with new resources, original analysis, clear explanations and dozens of tests.

Paperback • 272 pages • € 25.95 • available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com • a NEW IN CHESS publication

2014-1

PUBLISHER:
Allard Hoogland
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF:
Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam
Jan Timman



Contents

6 Silver Jubilee

9 Your Move

10 NIC's Café

12 Russia Wins World Teams
Russia's coach Yuri Dokhoian reveals the philosophy behind his coaching.

32 Lothar Schmid's Library
The biggest private chess collection in the world is up for sale.

40 London Classic Goes Rapid
Jonathan Speelman saw 'the trickiest player on the planet' strike in the fifth edition of England's finest.

52 Rapid Chess
According to Nigel Short we should not only thank the Brits for sports like football, cricket and what have you.

54 A Matter of Style?
Mihail Marin wonders if the style of Lajos Portisch was really as tactical as they say. Or was it positional? Or?

64 Interview: Hikaru Nakamura
The American number one is happy with the stability he has found and the way his chess is improving.

70 My Most Beautiful Move
Finally, Willy Hendriks had the opportunity to play the move he had been dreaming about. To the desired effect?

74 Fun Games in Beijing
Maxime Vachier-Lagrave reports from the Mind Games, where he miraculously arrived one day ahead of schedule.

87 Beware: Brilliancy!

88 Who Can Say No to Nimzowitsch?
Hans Ree certainly can't.

92 Sadler on Books

100 Twenty Years on
High time for an update on the Karpov-Timman FIDE World Championship match of 1993.

106 Just Checking
What was the best piece of advice Daniel King ever got?

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE
Yochanan Afek, Yuri Dokhoian, Willy Hendriks, Anish Giri, Sergey Karjakin, Daniel King, Mihail Marin, Hikaru Nakamura, Ian Nepomniachtchi, Hans Ree, Matthew Sadler, Nigel Short, Jonathan Speelman, Jan Timman, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
Boris Dolmatovsky, Galiya Kamalova, Eteri Kublashvili, David Llada

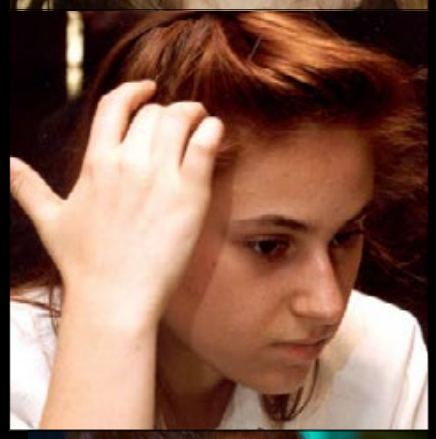
COVER
Hikaru Nakamura: New In Chess

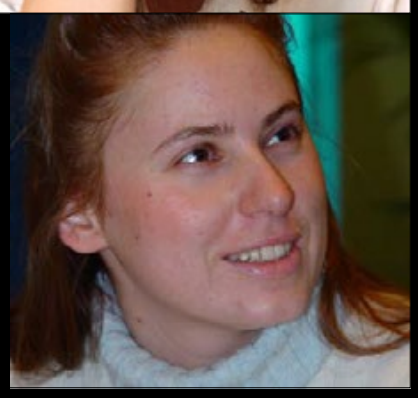
'Personally, situations I have encountered in chess games often provide a model for decision-making in real life.'

'Four players in the Top-10 who are not in the Candidates' tournament certainly shows that there is a problem with the format.'
– Hikaru Nakamura

Judit Polgar

Silver Jubilee

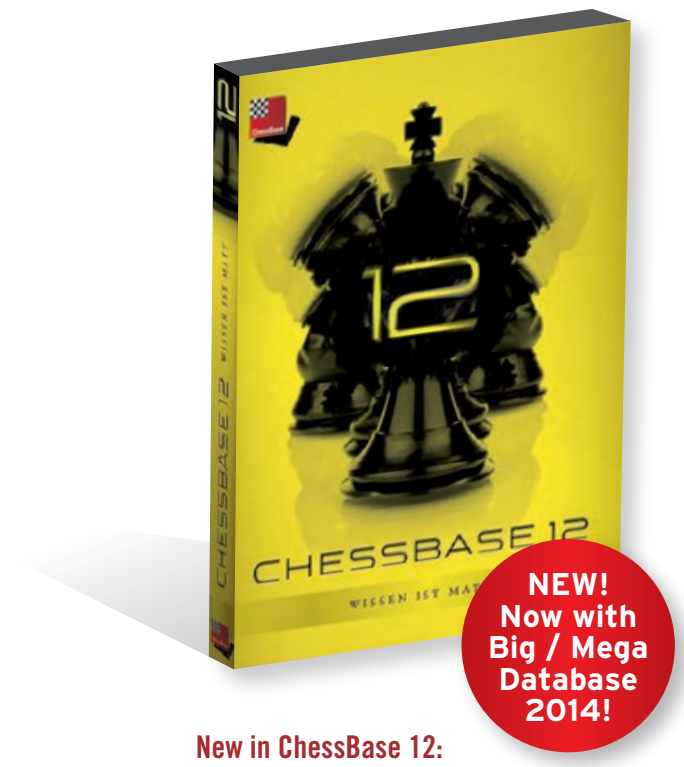




If you want to set baffling records, you'd better start practising early. Judit Polgar was a toddler when she learned to play chess. Now, at 37, a young energetic woman married with children, the former prodigy celebrates an astounding silver jubilee: on January 1st, she has been topping the women's world rankings for 25 years. It was a sensation when as a 12-year-old girl she took over the top position from World Champion Maya Chiburdanidze, and in the quarter of a century that followed her supremacy was never really challenged. But Judit never aspired to the highest women's title; her sights were set even higher. She stood her ground among the male elite, reaching 8th place in the world rankings in 2004 and a peak rating of 2735 a year later. Her general acceptance as a world-class player was once nicely illustrated by Vishy Anand, who quipped: 'We don't think of Judit as a woman, but as one of the boys.'

A mother of two and an ardent promoter of chess as an educational tool in primary schools, Judit Polgar is less active as a player these days. Nevertheless she continues to hold the top position in the women's rankings. Rated 2693, she is still 64 points ahead of the current number two, World Champion Hou Yifan. Actually, Judit has come to see a match against the Chinese champion as an interesting challenge. If the financial offer is right. And if she can first finish the third volume of her autobiographical games collection published by Quality Chess. In London, at the London Chess Classic, she received the ECF Book of the Year Award for part one, *How I Beat Bobby Fischer's Record*. Then she sat down to sign copies of the second volume, *From GM to Top 10*, which had just arrived from the printer's.

CHESSBASE 12



Start your personal success story now. ChessBase 12 is the chess database program which has become the world-wide standard. Get to know your next opponent'sweak points and exploit the advantage of targeted preparation. Enjoy the new ChessBase 12 program with fantastic new analysis and search features!

New in ChessBase 12:

"Deep analysis" generates a dynamic tree of variations. Leave the analysis running as long as you want. The longer the running time, the more reliable the variations displayed. Variations which do not hold up at the greater depth of calculation are automatically excluded. The result is commentary containing analysis of the important candidate moves. Strong improvement over the deep position analysis in Fritz, because it can run forever, all the while adapting the variation tree with ever-increasing depth.

Team up engines from different systems in a **"Cloud analysis".** This is a deep analysis done by several engines working in parallel, which saves an enormous amount of time. The engines are running on other computers, where they can be set up with a few clicks. You can even make the engines undertake different tasks: one engine always directs the analysis. Another spends all its time calculating the candidate moves in the starting position, in order to obtain the optimal depth of calculation. Then there is one or more other engines which are looking for the replies to each of the candidate moves etc.

"Similarity search": In ChessBase 12 endings can now be looked for with a single click and displayed classified according to their similarity to the position on the board. Access to a whole heap of endings with the same distribution of material on modern 64-Bit systems is gained in a few seconds only. And what works with endgames can also be transferred to middlegame positions. In this case too, a search is instigated for pawn structures which are almost similar to the position on the board and the similarity is considered on the basis of the position of the pieces.

More improvements:

- "Let'Check": aacces the wolrd´s largest database of in-depth engine analysis. Now with over 200 million position!*
- Optional 64Bit version: speeds up access to your databases
- Intelligent google-style search box for the ChessBase online database with now more than 6,4 million games*
- New look for the ChessMedia window, big database symbols for high resolution
- New engine dialog with CPU-optimisation
- One-click publication of one or more games on the web in a Java script.

System requirements: Minimum: Minimum: Pentium III 1 GHz, 1 GB RAM, Windows Vista, XP (Service Pack 3), DirectX9 graphics card with 256 MB RAM, DVD-ROM drive, Windows Media Player 9 and Internet access to activate the program, Playchess.com, Let's Check, Engine Cloud and updates.

Recommended: PC Intel Core i7, 2.8 GHz, 4 GB RAM, Windows 7 (64 Bit) or Windows 8 (64 Bit), DirectX10 graphics card (or compatible) with 512 MB RAM or more, 100% DirectX10 compatible sound card, Windows Media Player 11, DVD ROM drive and Internet access to activate the program, Playchess.com, Let's Check, Engine Cloud and updates.

ChessBase 12 - Starter package 179,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 Program**
- **Big Database 2014**
- **Games download until 31st December 2014**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.7 million games)***
- **Access to "Let's Check" and "Engine Cloud"**
- **Half a Year's subscription to ChessBase Magazine (3 issues)**

ChessBase 12 - Mega package 269,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 Program**
- **Mega Database 2014**
- **Games download until 31st December 2014**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.7 million games)***
- **Access to "Let's Check" and "Engine Cloud"**
- **Year's subscription to ChessBase Magazine (6 issues)**

ChessBase 12 - Premium package 369,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 Program**
- **Premium membership on playchess.com (1 year)**
- **Mega Database 2014**
- **Games download until 31st December 2014**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.7 million games)***
- **Access to "Let's Check" and "Engine Cloud"**
- **Year's subscription to ChessBase Magazine**
- **Corr Database 2013 + Endgame Turbo 3 (9 DVDs)**

ChessBase 12 - Upgrade from 11 99,90 €

- **ChessBase 12 program**
- **Access to ChessBase Online Database (over 6.7 million games)***

Only after you have returned your CB11 registration number!

*) the service lasts till 31.12.2015

CHESSBASE GMBH · OSTERBEKSTRASSE 90A · D-22083 HAMBURG · TEL ++(49) 40/639060-12 · FAX ++(49) 40/6301282 · WWW.CHESSBASE.COM · INFO@CHESSBASE.COM
CHESSBASE DEALER: NEW IN CHESS · P.O. Box 1093 · NL-1810 KB Alkmaar · phone (+31)72 5127137 · fax (+31)72 5158234 · **WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM**

Wanted: female under 40

I am a new subscriber and look forward to the day when your great magazine appears in my mailbox.

However, issue 2013/8 contained many games well over fifty moves long. I am 80 years old and reasonably robust, but if I tried playing over all those games, I would be a candidate for a gurney and a fast trip to a hospital.

But thankfully, there were two excellent games by female players, Valentina Gunina and Alexandra Kosteniuk, of 39 and 29 moves respectively, the latter game a genuine masterpiece.

With all the books being written on the French Defense and other openings, someone should consider writing a collection of games by those on the lovelier side of the grandmaster community. I would be the first in line to buy the book. Unless, of course, all the games were more than fifty moves.

Gary Farrell
Rochester, NY, USA

Funny sound

I found it interesting to learn in New In Chess 2013/8 that FIDE would decline to award the grandmaster title to Capablanca posthumously but award it to a number of players based on past performance who were insignificant as compared to him. It is true that he was not alive at the time, but his widow was. How unfortunate!

Nevertheless, I do believe that your article would have been a better article if it had described the distinction between the 'official' title of grandmaster and the unofficial one that was and is still used today.

Capablanca was given the title of Grandmaster (along with a few other incredibly strong players who never received the 'official' title of grandmaster) by Tsar Nicholas II of Russia due to his result at the 1914 St. Petersburg tournament.

However, the most important reason why you should have described the distinction between the official title and the unofficial title, is that if you had asked all of the world's chess players who the first Cuban grandmaster was, I can assure you that 99.9% of them would have said Capablanca. I guarantee you that I was not the only person who read that part of the article and turned his head like the dog that heard the funny sound.

John DiLucci
Irving, TX, USA

Hypnotized by a cobra

In the previous issue, a reader complained that both Anand and Carlsen should have been on the cover of 2013/7. I fully agree.

I can only imagine that for 2013/8, readers expected a cover picture of Carlsen smiling, or holding a trophy, or the famous moment when he jumped into the pool.

The Carlsen I see on the cover looks as if he was hypnotized by a cobra. Not really a flattering picture, and I seriously start to doubt the seriousness of whoever manages your covers. Really disappointing. If 'sex sells', then this is as unsexy as can be.

As for the content, I'm quite happy. I'm always happy when Giri, Svidler or Nakamura comment on games.

Question: Will you be reporting on the Amateur Chess World Cup in Rhodes in June? I finally decided to participate after seeing its advertisement in your magazine several times.

David Moreno
Barcelona, Spain

Childhood memories

I've read with pleasure the article by Sadler on the Botvinnik-Petrosian match in New In Chess 2013/8. Much closer than it looked.

Great joys await Mr. Sadler when he reviews the Botvinnik-Smyslov matches. I remember them from my childhood, hard fought and so interesting. By the way, the 1951 and 1961 matches are extremely interesting too.

And the Capablanca-Alekhine match, what a fight. Capablanca had at least 2 totally winning games (27 and 31), two great advantages in games 17 and 25 and good chances in 5 and 9. He didn't take his chances, and Alekhine did. At 39 Capablanca was no longer a young man and his easy victories had taken from him the capacity of making the maximum effort.

The best book on the match is the French book by Alekhine himself – there is a German version, but the French is Alekhine's original. Even if he didn't comment his losses and the games which didn't go his way, he was a great chess writer. Lots of pleasure for you, Mr. Sadler, and for us too.

Manuel Saborit
Castellon, Spain

Write to us

New In Chess, P.O. Box 1093
1810 KB Alkmaar, The Netherlands
or e-mail: editors@newinchess.com
Letters may be edited or abridged

COLOPHON

PUBLISHER: Allard Hoogland
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF:
Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam, Jan Timman
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Anish Giri
EDITORS: Peter Boel, René Olthof
ART-DIRECTION: Jan Scholtus
PRODUCTION: Joop de Groot
TRANSLATORS:
Sarah Hurst, Ken Neat, Piet Verhagen
SALES AND ADVERTISING: Remmelt Otten

© No part of this magazine may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

NEW IN CHESS
P.O. BOX 1093
1810 KB ALKMAAR
THE NETHERLANDS

PHONE: 00-31-(0)72-51 27 137
FAX: 00-31-(0)72-51 58 234
E-MAIL:
SUBSCRIPTIONS: nic@newinchess.com
EDITORS: editors@newinchess.com
SALES AND ADVERTISING:
otten@newinchess.com

BANK DETAILS:
IBAN: NL41ABNA 0589126024
BIC: ABNANL2A in favour of Interchess BV, Alkmaar, The Netherlands

WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

Now it's my turn

It rubs off, they say, and it does. Plenty of examples can be given of players working behind the scenes for great champions that benefit unmistakably from their lowly endeavours when they return to the tournament arena. For months, those players' desire to play themselves has been suppressed, and once this pent-up force is unleashed, fine things can happen. Just look at the aftermath of the Carlsen-Anand World Championship match. The key member of Magnus Carlsen's analytical team, and perhaps even the only member, was Jon Ludvig Hammer. The young Norwegian knows full well that most of the craze in his country is about the Carlsen phenomenon

DAVID LLADA

Jon Ludvig Hammer with his lucky Norway Chess scarf ...

and not necessarily about the game, but secretly he must be cherishing hopes that if he becomes an elite player as well, chess may gain further popularity in Norway. His first destination after the match was the Open of the London Chess Classic. And although he arrived without luggage, he remained in good spirits and won his first game ('Played 1.♘f3 – move of World Champions!'). It wasn't the last game he won, and after nine rounds he finished clear first with a score of 7½ out of 9 and a 2728 performance. Happy with his win, he extended a special thanks to his Norway Chess scarf, which 'worked brilliantly as a good luck charm, as well as shielding me from that nasty London wind.'

Immediately after Christmas, there was good reason to take his chess scarf to his next tournament as well, as the Rilton Cup in Stockholm was waiting. Once again he scored 7½ out of 9, finishing half a point ahead of Volkov and a full point ahead of Grandelius, Krasenkow, Smirin, Socko, Goganov and Hillarp-Persson.

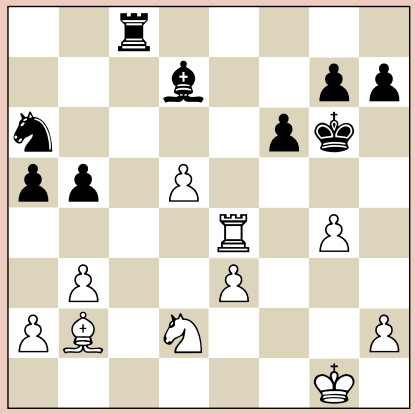
With his new rating of 2645 Hammer is poised to re-enter the World Top 100 and has reclaimed the number 2 spot in Norway from Simen Agdestein. A good example of the energy he played with is the following game. Eager to win, he is ready to flirt with danger.

DAVID LLADA

... that keeps him laughing and winning.

QO 16.5 – D02
Daniil Lintchevski
Jon Ludvig Hammer
Stockholm Rilton Cup 2013/14

1.♘f3 d5 2.d4 ♘f6 3.c4 e6 4.e3 b6 5.b3 ♗d6 6.♘bd2 0-0 7.♗b2 ♗b7 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♗d3 ♘e4 10.0-0 ♕e7 11.♖c1 a6 12.♘e5 f6 13.♗xe4 dxe4 14.♘ec4 b5 15.♘xd6 cxd6 16.♕c2 a5 17.♕c7 ♕xc7 18.♖xc7 ♖f7 19.♖xf7 ♔xf7 20.f3 d5!? Black could steer for a drawish position with 20...exf3 , but as Hammer tweeted after the game: 'No guts, no glory!' Black is ready to give up a pawn to keep the fight going. **21.fxe4 dxe4 22.♖f5 ♗c6 23.d5 ♔g6! 24.g4 ♗d7 25.♖f4 ♘a6 26.♖xe4 ♖c8**



White is a pawn up, but the activity of Black's pieces offers sufficient compensation. **27.♘f3 ♘b4 28.♘h4+ ♔f7 29.d6 ♘d5 30.♘g2 ♖c2 31.♘f4 ♘xf4 32.♖e7+ ♔g6 33.exf4 ♗xg4 34.♗d4 ♖d2 35.♗b6 ♖xd6 36.♗xa5 ♖a6 37.b4 ♖d6 38.♖b7 ♖d1+ 39.♔f2 ♖d2+ 40.♔g3 ♗d7 41.♗b6 h5 42.♗e3?** And as his boss taught him: if you keep the pressure, the mistakes will inevitably follow. **42...h4+ 43.♔xh4 ♖d3** White resigned. The precarious position of his king costs material.

Two more

And what about the other team? Although he is only 26 years old, Radoslaw Wojtaszek was the 'leader' of Vishy Anand's team of seconds in Chennai. As the Polish grandmaster had served him well in three previous world championship matches, Anand counted on him to explain to the others how he wanted things done. Needless to say that after the match Anand and his men had little to rejoice about, but even so Wojtaszek must have had a burning desire, too, to move the pieces himself again. He did so in Switzerland, where he took part in two Swiss (sic) tournaments around the New Year and, just like Hammer, won both! First he won the Zurich Christmas Open with 6 out of 7 and a 2823 performance. Then he travelled on to Basel, where he was even

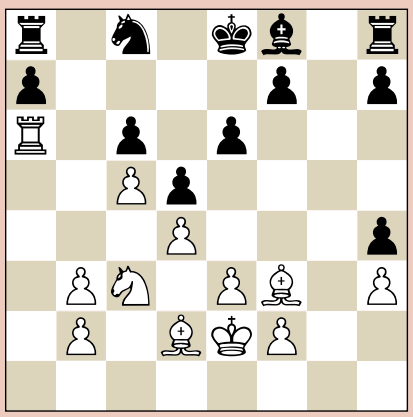
more ruthless, scoring 6½ from 7. Altogether he gained enough rating points to shoot up to 26th place in the live ratings.

Radek Wojtaszek: 12½ out of 14!

In the last round in Zurich, Wojtaszek played an impressive game.

SL 1.6 – D11
Radoslaw Wojtaszek
Ivan Popov
Zurich 2013

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 ♗g4 5.♕b3 ♕b6 6.♘c3 e6 7.♘h4 ♗h5 8.h3 ♕xb3 9.axb3 ♘a6 10.g4 ♘b4 11.♔e2 g5 12.gxh5 gxh4 13.♗g2 ♘xh5 14.♗f3 ♘f6 15.♗d2 ♘d7 16.♖a5 ♘b6 17.c5 ♘c8 18.♖ha1 In a popular theoretical line the players have reached a position in which Black is a pawn up, but White has the better play. Black's next move looks natural enough. **18...♘a6** But runs into a strong exchange sacrifice. **19.♖xa6! bxa6 20.♖xa6**



It is instructive to see how in the next phase Wojtaszek exploits the weaknesses in Black's position. **20...♔d7 21.b4 ♖b8 22.b5! cxb5 23.♗h5! ♔e7 24.e4! b4 25.♗g5+ ♔e8** 25...f6 is not really an option in view of 26.♘xd5+. **26.♘a4 ♗e7** Equally tough is 26...dxe4 27.♖xe6+. **27.♗f4! ♖b5 28.♖xe6 dxe4 29.♖c6** And it's over. **29...♔d7 30.♖c7+ ♔e6 31.♔e3 ♖d8 32.♔xe4 f5+ 33.♔d3 ♖a5 34.b3** Having suffered enough, Black resigned.

Searching for real friends

Can you imagine that there was a time when we lived without The Week In Chess? It certainly requires an effort. Websites devoted to chess in one way or another come and go all the time, and some of them have been around for a respectable number of years. Still, it seems safe to say that no chess site has had such a loyal following for so many years as The Week In Chess, more commonly known as TWIC.

On January 6th, the 1000th issue of TWIC's weekly newsletter was published, and we bow deeply to Mark Crowther. Of course Crowther relied and relies on a worldwide network and always acknowledged their help, but it is no exaggeration to say that for close to 20 years he has been running his website single-handedly.

Looking at the history of TWIC, you almost get the feeling that you're looking at a history of the web itself – from the sensation and hopes of the early years till the seemingly unlimited possibilities and harsh realities of today.

When TWIC started in 1994, it was the hobby of a chess lover exploring the possibilities of a new medium. Mark Crowther worked as a librarian and spent his free hours collecting all the chess news he could lay his hands on. His website fulfilled the demand for such information and data to such an extent that in 1996 he turned professional. By then TWIC had become what it would remain in the years that followed: a reliable and indispensable source. There was no better place to download the latest games and find out which tournaments were going on.

Having listened to all this, you might expect that Mark Crowther is in clover and that the future of TWIC is radiant. Unfortunately, the facts show otherwise. In 2012, his deal with the London Chess Centre of the previous 15 years ended, and without this financial support the prospects became uncertain. Like so many Internet entrepreneurs, he had to experience that the illusion that everything has to be for free is still widespread. Once you ask your 'friends' for money, no matter how small the amount, they may no longer 'like' you that much.

Mark Crowther on the day he published the 1000th issue of TWIC.

Mark Crowther closes his recap of the past 20 years with: 'My impression is that the TWIC magazine and games each week are still well appreciated and used (perhaps disproportionately by professional writers and players) and that it would be a shame to stop if 500-1000 people are prepared to support its continuation with donations that allow me to continue. (...) In a small plea I would say, now is a very good time to make donations or significant offers of sponsorship.'

We can only hope that his modest plea is heard and that the number of his real friends is higher than he could have imagined. ■

Antalya

‘A player representing his country has to be burning inside’

After a long interlude of failure and setbacks the Russian men’s team won the gold medals at the **World Team Championship** in Antalya. Growing in strength as they progressed, the national squad of the number one chess country in the world showed why they want to be favourites at the 2014 Olympiad in Tromsø. Their victory was also a new triumph for their coach, the former trainer of Garry Kasparov and the man who managed to get the Russian women’s team back on the rails. In a frank and detailed evaluation, **Yuri Dokhoian** explains how he hopes to mould the Russian team and speaks openly about his choices and the philosophy behind his coaching.

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

‘At the closing ceremony the guys lifted me up. I hadn’t expect it and was very touched.’

BORIS DOLMATOVSKY

The members of the victorious Russian team that travelled home to Moscow: Vladimir Potkin, Sergey Karjakin, Nikita Vitiugov, Yuri Dokhoian, Alexander Grischuk and Alexander Motylev.

The World Team Championship began a week after the end of the European Team Championship – a unique situation that I decided to exploit as a coach. A rare opportunity presented itself to watch a large number of players in action all at once. By comparison with other sports, there aren't many team events in chess, so we decided to vary the line-up. As a result, nine Russian grandmasters took part in the two tournaments – only Alexander Grischuk played in both events.

This was a rather risky move, of course, but I think it justified itself. My mission as a coach is to give players the opportunity to demonstrate their best qualities, specifically in team events. To do that, I have to give lots of players a chance, especially the young ones! They need to be given this chance before the main event, which is the Olympiad, of course. Now, after two big tournaments, I and the whole coaching brigade, which includes Alexander Motylev and Vladimir Potkin, have formed a precise plan of preparation for the 2014 Olympiad.

Of course, I can say that this is a specifically Russian problem – too many contenders for a place on the team. It's probably quite true that in other countries there isn't such an abundance of worthy candidates. But even though it's specific, it doesn't stop being a problem. Forming a team is a gradual process. I already went through it with the Russian women's team, who didn't win their first gold medals straight away either.

When I came to the men's team, they were playing badly. They were out of the medals at the World and European Championships, and for such a strong team, getting into the prizes is a necessary minimum. You have to aim for gold, of course, but in the modern world the competition is strong, with lots of teams vying for victory, and so getting into the prizes can't be a bad result.

How can we know who exactly is worthy of representing their country? The person has to be burning inside. A professional has to understand why he sits down at the board, why he has to squeeze the last drop out of himself. For that you need completely different concentration and motivation. I hope I've managed to help many of the guys on the team. In any case, at the World Championship – starting from the third round – the team just played better and better. The process of forming it wasn't easy, but it brought me a mass of positive emotions. Any mistake can be exploited to achieve a future victory if you pull yourself together and display character. It's mistakes that give you the opportunity to demonstrate your strength of will and concentrate your energy.

So at the European Championship, after losing their match against Turkey, the team started playing different chess. At that tournament Peter Svidler only just pulled through in all his matches. We had a heart-to-heart talk, as people, I gave him some recommendations, and he changed. I saw a different Svidler. That is the coach's task. Although we didn't even get into the prizes, there was still a spoonful of honey in that barrel of tar.

Our coaching group works with each player to bring out their best qualities. I think this is a particular pleasure – to play powerfully for the team. When it isn't only you who needs the result, but someone else too. We look for players for whom these metamorphoses are typical. When these kinds of people get together, we have a real team. Without that it's hard to win nowadays. Tenacity and indestructability of spirit play a decisive role.

Those who have followed the women's tournaments know that I usually spend all my time on the floor with the players. I have to sense what's going on in the soul of each player. Of course, there were far more surprises from the women. But if we recall, for example, the match against Holland at the European Championship – it went according to the best traditions of women's chess. Huge amounts of adrenaline, a real adventure.

It's important for me to feel the team spirit, to understand the essence of what's happening in the match. I can only do that by being in the thick of things. On the other hand, it's important to determine the necessary level of tension for the coach to create. Getting the players too worked up is also a bad idea, of course.

We didn't have any training sessions before the World Team Championship. We arrived literally two days after Europe, just to have a rest. We'd changed the players, but the coaching team remained the same. This wasn't only grandmasters, but also our excellent doctor Danila – after Warsaw the players were happy with his work. He's an experienced person who has worked with many sports teams and individual sports people. Stressful situations often arise, when the atmosphere is electrified with emotions, and a doctor like this is simply essential for a team that wants to win on a regular basis.

I'll go back to the beginning of the event. The players were just starting to get used to each other. Of course, the ideal team can't change completely from tournament to tournament. There has to be a skeleton (3-4 people) and 1-2 new people – fresh blood, when someone from the old line-up isn't showing good play. That's how I formed the women's team. The men's team is different, of course, very different, but on the whole, if possible, we should follow the same path.

> 'The Americans have become unpleasant opponents for us, and we have to look for the key to that team.'

At all events in the round-robin system the first question is, was our draw lucky? In the first three rounds we had end-to-end matches with Armenia, the USA and China. What can I say, looking back? A draw is lucky if it leads to victory. Which means that for Russia to follow the winning path we needed that one specifically. After taking first place I won't complain.

Armenia was and remains a serious chess rival for everyone, including Russia. Towards the end of the second tournament the Armenian team was tired. But in the first round they were full of energy and extremely aggressively inclined after failing to take any medals at the European Championship.

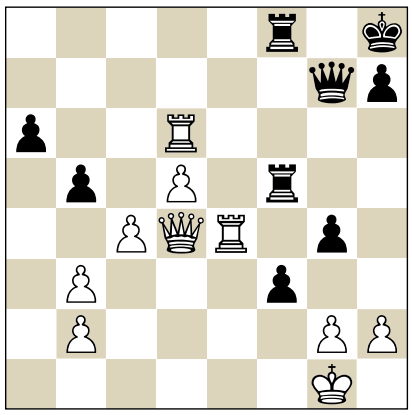
The match against Armenia showed that in our team we have an 'energy unit' that changes by itself and often changes the character and result of a match. This is Ian Nepomniachtchi. Quite a lot depended on his play. This is normal: on a team, especially a strong team, the fourth board really should tip the balance in its favour. In the end that's what happened, but it was worrying at first. In his game against Sargissian the opening was foreseen, and Ian seized the initiative, but then started playing too quickly and missed several crucial moments in the game. He should have displayed accuracy, but he miscalculated and got a losing position – but he kept fighting and saved the game.

Of course, you could say that the Armenian team was just unlucky. But those are the peculiarities of Nepomniachtchi's style. When he wants a piece to go somewhere, it gets there very quickly. Ian turns his desire into an existing fact. While you could say that he won his games at the beginning of the championship somewhat unjustifiably, by the end of it he'd learned to play just as quickly, but also legitimately. On the other boards the battles were still in full swing, but Ian was already finishing his game. He needed his winning positions to be achieved by 'legal' means, without sharp changes in the evaluation of the position. Overall, the tie with Armenia was fair, there was an equal battle, and all the games ended in draws.

The second match, against the U.S. team, went badly. The Americans have become unpleasant opponents for us, and we have to look for the key to that team. In the end, the game on Board 4 was the decisive one. Nikita Vitiugov got into a big battle, but the game showed that he hadn't managed to work things out yet. Vitiugov's opening preparation and the nuances

of his style are very specific. On the one hand, it's spirited and interesting preparation; on the other, it's aimed at 'knocking out open tournaments'. Now Nikita faces the task of varying his opening repertoire as both White and Black, taking into consideration the fact that he has to play in stronger tournaments. There you don't have to 'launch into a battle' – it starts by itself. You don't have to go looking for trouble. You have to become a more universal player who can not only kick off a battle, but also play solidly when necessary, which is an important quality too.

Every match after a defeat is inevitably a test. Against China our team was already playing better than they did against Armenia. Kramnik had to win as White, and he dominated his whole game. Karjakin had no problem as Black, accurately making a draw with Wang Yue. Grischuk seized the initiative and was better. In the end Vladimir and Alexander couldn't make the most of their advantages, and on the last board Nepomniachtchi whipped up another adventure. He was slightly worse, as it's always difficult to play for a win with a knight on e8. But, as I've already said, Ian's pieces move quickly, and if they do achieve the aim that he sets for them, it makes an impression.



Yu Yangyi-Nepomniachtchi
position after 40.♕d4

Ian's opponent, a strong young grandmaster, thought for a long time. For the last five moves his only idea had been how to exchange queens. And now he found a way, after which Ian immediately executed a combination. **40...f2+ 41.♔f1 ♕xd4 42.♖xd4 ♖h5!** On 42...♖e5? the move 43.♖e6 could be found. But now after **43.♖d2 g3! 44.h3 ♖xh3!** the pawn queens, and White resigned.

In the end we won, although not on the board where we would have expected to.

Our match against Azerbaijan was also quite significant. Albeit in a weaker form, these guys were still the newly-baked champions of Europe. They are young and ambitious. Our team played this match on a different level this time: they didn't have any particular problems as Black, while as White Karjakin had the advantage, and Vitiugov had a time advantage and a virtually winning position. Although Nikita didn't win, I praised him because this was now different chess, and it had become clear that from this point on he would only play better. He got into the game, chose his move, and I put him into the main line-up without any doubts. Seryozha played fairly accurately and put the squeeze on his opponent. It wasn't the ideal match, but it was the beginning of decent play by the team.

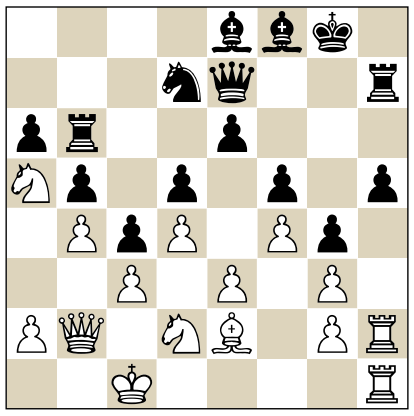
Our team sensed their internal energy, their winning spirit. They played their match against Germany on an even higher level, and overall with each new match they played more and more strongly. Karjakin beat Khenkin, Grischuk beat Meier and Vitiugov outplayed Naiditsch, whom the Germans placed on the last board. Their game wasn't error-free; Arkadij put some pressure on, but as soon as he gave his opponent a chance, Nikita took it.

It seemed that the next match, against the Turks, wouldn't be that important. As against this, we had to win all our remaining matches, and at the same time we still had a painful memory from the European Championship, where we lost to them.

Nepomniachtchi quickly got a decisive advantage as Black. Kramnik was also in uncompromising mood as Black after a rest day, absolutely radiating energy and the desire to win, and ready to make as many moves as were required. He ended up with a classical game in Vladimir's style.

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

Team spirit as an absolute prerequisite for success. Top scorer Ian Nepomniachtchi and Russian trainers Vladimir Potkin and Alexander Motylev.



Ipatov-Kramnik
position after 29.♔c1

You can get enormous pleasure out of moves like 29...e6-e5 (see Anish Giri's analysis of this game on the next page – ed.). But you get the most pleasure from this wave of team spirit that lifts you up and carries you to success. I'm very glad that we took the gold, but feeling that togetherness is even more valuable. One for all and all for one. When one person wasn't doing so well, someone else tried harder and squeezed water out of a stone. There are no easy wins, there will always be some kind of problem, but the question is how the team deals with them.

The Ukrainian team started very strongly, but as each day passed, their dynamic worsened. What did one match against Egypt cost them! All teams have their failures, and at that moment you have to display your best qualities. We didn't start off very well, but after that we were always in the ascendant.

We won our match against Holland with almost the maximum score – and during it the most overwhelming position was that of Grischuk, who drew against Tiviakov in the end. Alexander is always an excellent team player, but towards the end of his second tournament he ran out of strength. On the other hand, Vitiugov demonstrated wonderful technique. He started playing the chess I had wanted to see in his appearances for the team.

Finally the moment of our encounter with Ukraine came, in which only a win suited us. On that team Ivanchuk and Korobov played strongly – the latter won the decisive games in their matches against the USA and China (and also in the last round against Armenia). In general Anton often comes out with fantastic games: seamless and beautiful. What can I say about Vassily, everyone knows how strong he is. So we expected a match between two heavyweight teams.

In his game against Ivanchuk, Kramnik controlled the situation fairly precisely and delivered a blow when the opportunity presented itself, but nevertheless the affair ended in a draw. Karjakin got an advantage in the opening against Korobov, but at a certain point he decided to win without giving his opponent any counterplay. This doesn't usually work with strong players, and it didn't here. Grischuk thought for a very long time and could have got an unpleasant position somewhere. But his opponent Moiseenko was also tired already and didn't want to stray outside the boundaries of acceptable risk.

Nepomniachtchi gradually outplayed Kryvoruchko. His bishop somehow got from g2 to d5 very quickly, although there were white pawns on f3 and e4. Objectively, this position already had a big advantage, and his time advantage was also starting to make itself felt. Kryvoruchko had to be active, but he decided to stand still. And blundered. No questions for once: Ian was a better fighter than his opponent.

Of course, the last match – against Egypt – didn't pass off without any adventures. There are several nuances here. Firstly, the morning round is always difficult, although at the last Olympiad we actually played it really well against Germany. Secondly, the inevitable relaxation after our win against Ukraine, as we had basically secured ourselves victory. And also, absolutely all teams somehow get in a special mood for the Russian team and play very well. Which is what happened: although the sporting problem was solved (Nepomniachtchi won quickly), the match against Egypt ended in the following way. Kramnik's opponent sacrificed his queen, and a very intriguing and imperfect game ensued. The Egyptian grandmaster realized that he would have been clobbered in the opening, and took a risk. Volodya started to think and lost time. Naturally he wanted to win, but his opponent forced him to respect him. In actual fact, Egypt was a fearsome team that grew from round to round. They played better with each match, understanding that not everything was predetermined. Against Ukraine they almost won, and against Russia they looked good. And although a tie with Egypt would have been fine for us, we wanted to finish the tournament in a major key. And we managed it!

To conclude my report on that match, I want to say that all the teams and all the players were worthy of respect. No one should look down on them. One of the best results of the championship was that of the Egyptian Amin, a strong and talented player. What he could become with a tough coach! Looking at the Egyptian team, I saw how people fight. It's their ability to unite that distinguishes the team. That's how the German team won the European Championship in 2011. It's what the Armenian team showed the world: team spirit. It's what the winning team must keep cultivating. Lots of people have learned how to play chess, and the average level of the teams was very high. You have to find something that makes your team stand out from the rest.

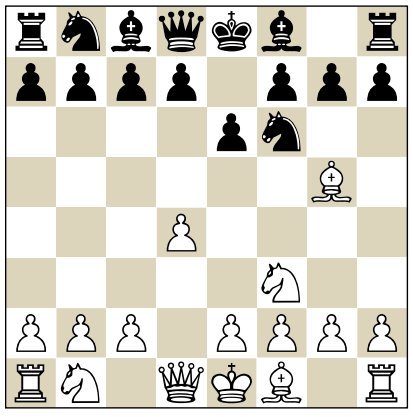
We all depend on each other. If the players don't make the most of our efforts, the coaches can't prove themselves. If a coach slacks off somehow, a grandmaster won't get a result. Everyone is important – the players, the coaching group, the doctor. Thank you to the leadership of the federation, which not only created all the conditions for our preparation, but also provided psychological support for all of us.

At the closing ceremony the guys lifted me up. I hadn't expect it and was very touched. And I decided that possibly our efforts hadn't been in vain. And I also decided that it was time to lose some weight.

NOTES BY
Anish Giri

QP 4.7 – A46
Alexander Ipatov
Vladimir Kramnik
Antalya 2013 (6)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.♗g5

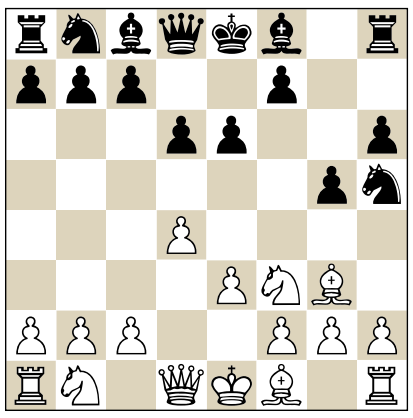


Alexander very ambitiously hopes to get Kramnik off the well-trodden paths, and rightly so – he knows it's not every day that he gets a chance to catch such a big fish.

3...h6 4.♗h4 d6

Watching Kramnik in unusually deep and concentrated thought, I could see how much he enjoyed the way the opening had developed – now they got to play chess as soon as move 4!

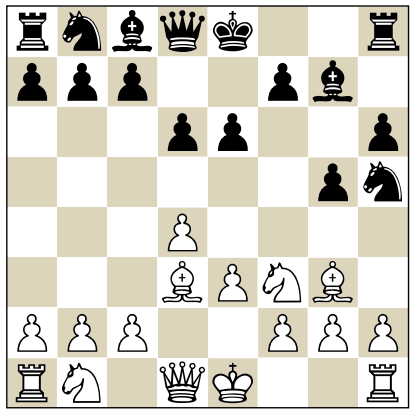
5.e3 g5 6.♗g3 ♘h5



White always has to pay a price for avoiding mainstream theory. Here the price is the beautiful dark-squared bishop.

7.♗d3 ♗g7

It is instructive (typical) that the bishop on g3 is not being taken. It has nowhere to run.

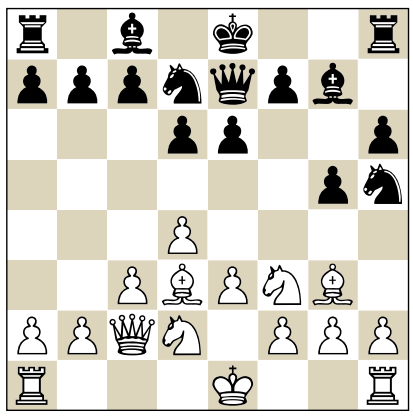


8.♘bd2

White chooses a rather passive plan, which eventually leads to problems. I would consider developing with c4 and ♘c3, as the knight is more involved in the centre this way. In general, after studying my game against Magnus from 2012, where I managed to draw with black after a very dubious opening (which went in a similar fashion), I realized that giving up the dark-squared bishop in this way is often not so bad, since even though White often gives up the dark squares (even with the d4-d5 push), he establishes a light-square hegemony instead.

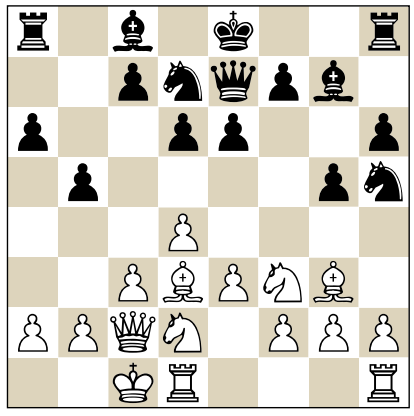
So 8.c4!? c5 9.♘c3 ♘c6 10.d5!, followed by something like ♘d2 and ♕c2, is what I said above, but then in the language of chess.

8...♕e7 9.c3 ♘d7 10.♕c2



Both sides are playing from a distance. While it's the usual game for Alexander, I am sure it was somewhat of an unorthodox feeling for his great and experienced opponent. As for objective assessments, I think Black is doing very well, having a clear plan of a pawn advance and a bishop pair to back it up, though White is of course quite solid.

10...a6 11.0-0-0 b5



If this pawn structure deserves a name, I propose some bird. Look at the wings: a6-b5-c7 and h6-g5-f7. 'Firebird' or 'Phoenix' perhaps?

12.♘b3

Nicely touching the weak spot of the 'phoenix' (sorry for those who voted for 'firebird'), the a5-square.

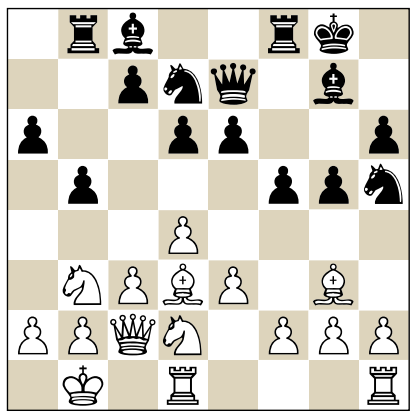
12...♖b8 13.♔b1

13.♘a5 is nicely met by 13...♖b6!, and the essence of the phoenix, the c6-square, is controlled.

13...0-0

Kramnik sees no danger in castling into a somewhat weakened kingside. As we will see later, he plans to keep the position there closed by advancing his f-pawn.

14.♘fd2 f5



Sometimes pushing the pawns can also be defensive!

15.f3 ♘xg3 16.hxg3 c5!

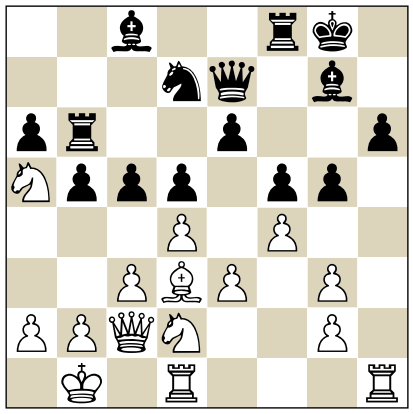
I am sorry to elaborate on the 'phoenix' theme, but the bird has spread its wings, that's obvious. And if you want some real high-quality chess comments, I can say that while the left

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

The way his 'phoenix rose from the ashes' must have pleased Vladimir Kramnik's aesthetic ego a lot.

wing (kingside) is protecting the king, the right wing (queenside) is attacking the white one.

17.♘a5 ♖b6 18.f4 d5



I can tell that the heart of big Vlad was screaming with joy! A global advance of the pawns, the gradual evolution of the phoenix... into a Stonewall. I don't think that's what Charles Darwin intended his theory to look like.

19.b4

Alexander correctly felt that something urgent had to be be done before he got smashed by the pawns of his intimidating opponent. Yet this is not the correct reaction.

19.dxc5! was the only way to keep the game alive, stopping the pawn mass from rolling over him: 19...♘xc5 20.♘db3, and while I can't say I like White's position, he is still alive. ...b4 is met by c4, while ...e5 doesn't kill, so Kramnik would still have to show us how he plans to break White's defence.

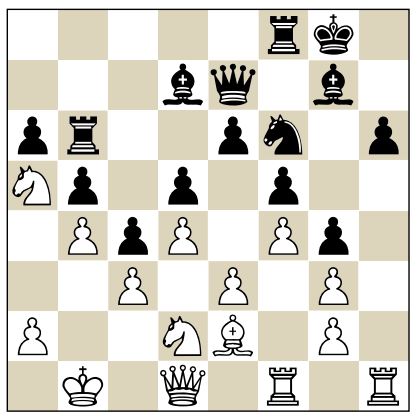
19...c4! While the pawn was by no means poisoned, Vladimir chooses a more instructive approach, shutting everything down and then breaking through.

20.♗e2 ♘f6

I would have closed the position immediately with 20...g4!?, not giving White options like fxg5, ♘f3 or ♗h5.

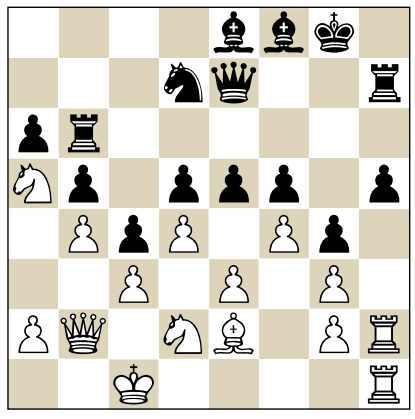
21.♖df1 After 21.♘f3!? at least the knight gets sent to e5, though the prospects are still quite sad for White.

21...♗d7 22.♕d1 g4!



Finally making it clear that there will be no open files today. Now my first thought was that Black wanted to win a pawn at some point by going ...♗f6-d8-xa5, but it soon became clear that he had a much more effective and aesthetic plan. Yet again, the usual, 'going-for-the-most-protected-square' thing!

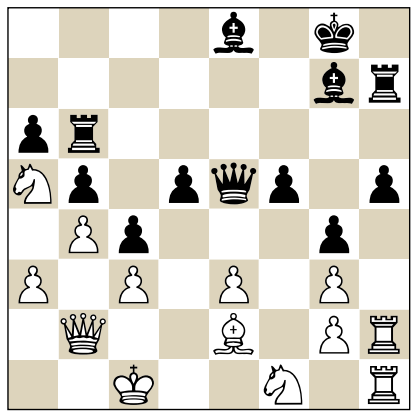
23.♔b2 ♖f7 24.♕c1 ♗f8 25.♔c2 ♖h7 26.♖h2 ♗e8 27.♖fh1 ♘d7 28.♕b2 h5 29.♔c1 e5!



Bang! The most classical way of winning such closed positions with clear positional domination is this sort of breakthrough. As paradoxical as it is, it feels as if it's Black who will be the piece up in the coming open struggle.

30.dxe5 ♘xe5 31.fxe5 ♕xe5 32.♘f1 ♗g7 33.a3

Alexander had to bite the bullet with 33.♔d2, but of course. having absolutely NO next moves (look how terribly the white pieces are placed), he is bound to lose. Black obviously has ways to break open the position, and it will start with ...♖e6, ...♗g6, ...♗f6, ...♖he7, and then something will come up.



33...♕xc3+ 34.♕xc3 ♗xc3

Although the material balance is roughly equal, White is absolutely hopeless here. His pieces are out of play and all his pawns are preys.

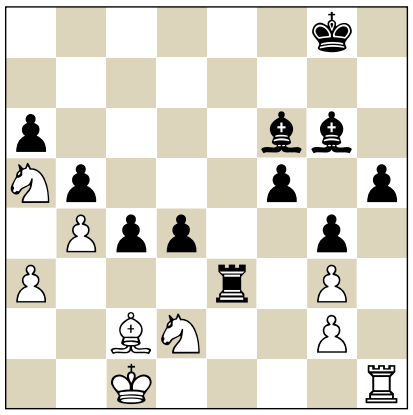
35.♗d1

35.e4 was the best try, but after, for example, 35...d4!? White is just dead lost: 36.exf5 ♖e7.

35...♖e6 36.♗c2 ♗g6 37.♘d2

Otherwise ...d4 would open up the position anyway.

37...♖xe3 38.♖d1 ♗f6 39.♖hh1 d4 40.♖de1 ♖he7 41.♖xe3 ♖xe3



And since it became really too painful to look at the position, White had to resign.

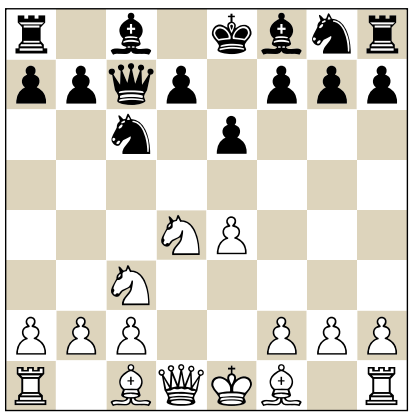
Picturesque. Must have pleased the aesthetic ego of Kramnik quite a lot.

NOTES BY
Sergey Karjakin

SI 40.2 – B48
Sergey Karjakin
Eltaj Safarli
Antalya 2013 (4)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 ♕c7

A surprise! Earlier Eltaj had usually played 5...♘f6, for example against Grischuk at the Olympiad in Istanbul.



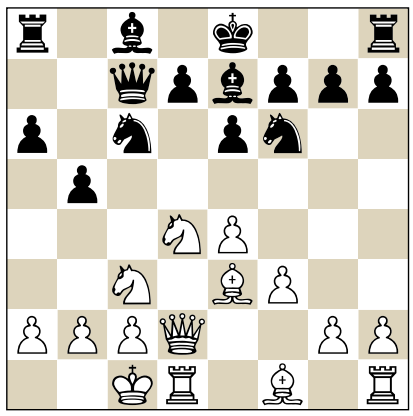
6.♗e3

Later in this tournament, in my game with Korobov (who also played the Paulsen for the first time in his life!), I chose the quieter move 6.♗e2. In the end we transposed into a Scheveningen. I did not achieve anything special and the game ended in a draw. But in this game I wanted to obtain a sharper position and without any great hesitation I chose the sharper plan with queenside castling.

6...a6 7.♕d2 ♘f6 8.0-0-0 ♗e7

Earlier 8...♗b4 was considered the main move, but times change and now this more modest move is in fashion, leaving Black the possibility of playing ...b7-b5-b4.

9.f3 b5



10.♔b1

A rare move. 10.g4 is far more popular, but after my loss to Topalov in Beijing my trainers and I began seeking fresh ideas in this position, and we decided to surprise the opponent at an early stage. This was completely successful and over his next few moves Eltaj began thinking for a long time. As a result, at an early stage of the game he began to get into time-trouble.

10...♘xd4

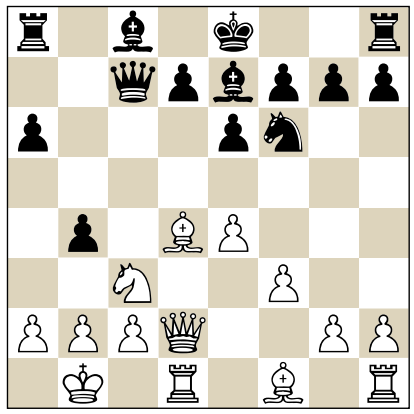
On the whole a thematic move, although here the developing 10...♗b7 looks more logical. But I should make the proviso that the position is a fresh one and a more accurate assessment can only be given by further practice.

11.♗xd4 b4

Again a thematic move, but here this looks like a concession, since the white knight happily aims for b6.

11...e5 followed by ♗b7 was possibly more interesting, but on the whole it seems to me that Black should not have hurried with the capture on d4.

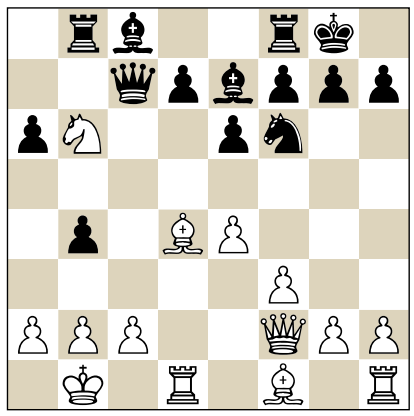
11.♗xd4 b4



12.♘a4 ♖b8 13.♕f2

Not the most forceful decision. I saw that it would be very interesting to play 13.c4!, but then I nevertheless decided to transfer my knight to b6. Meanwhile, after 13.c4 Black's position is already extremely unpleasant, for example: 13...bxc3 (13...d6 14.c5! dxc5 15.♘xc5; 13...e5 14.♗e3 ♕c6 15.b3) 14.♕xc3 ♕xc3 15.♘xc3 and White has a pleasant endgame.

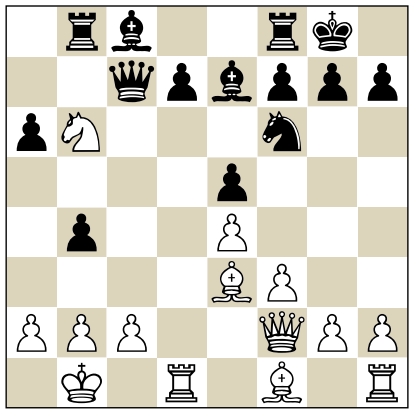
13...0-0 14.♘b6



14...e5?!

A dubious decision. Black voluntarily weakens his d5-point. After 14...d6 White might have regretted his hasty decision to transfer his knight to b6. Winning the bishop on c8 does not give anything in particular, and meanwhile Black plans to drive away the knight by ♘d7. And although the position remains complicated, it has to be said that White has lost his opening advantage.

15.♗e3

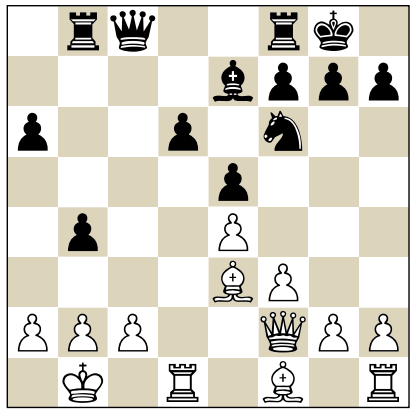


15...d6

More active play does not work: 15...♗b7 16.g4 ♗xe4 17.g5! (weaker is 17.fxe4 ♘xg4 18.♖xd7 ♕c6 19.♘d5 ♕xd7 20.♕f5 ♕xf5 21.♘xe7+ ♔h8 22.♘xf5 g6 23.h3 ♘xe3 24.♘xe3 f5) 17...♘g4 18.fxg4 ♗xh1 19.♖xd7 ♕c6 20.♖xe7 ♖xb6! (clever but insufficient) 21.♗xb6 ♕d6 22.a4! ♕xe7 23.♗c5 ♕xg5 24.♗xf8 ♔xf8 25.♗xa6 and White is better.

16.♘xc8 Here 16.g4 is no longer good, because of 16...♗xg4!.

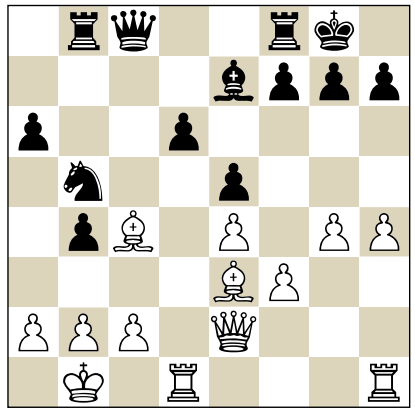
16...♕xc8



17.b3

A superficial and weak move! After obtaining an advantage in time and in position, I did not bother to investigate carefully and I made a natural move, with the aim of bringing my bishop onto the long diagonal. Meanwhile, I completely overlooked my opponent's idea.

17.g4! was simple and strong, for example: 17...a5 (at the board I was not sure about 17...d5!?, but the simple 18.g5 d4 19.♗xd4 ♘xe4 20.fxe4 exd4 21.h4 secures White an advantage; 17...♘e8 18.h4 ♘c7 19.♗c4 ♘b5 20.♕e2



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

This is where it tells that White has not weakened himself with b3!) 18.g5 ♘h5 19.b3 a4 20.♗c4 with an obvious advantage for White.

17...♘e8!

Accurately demonstrating the drawbacks of the move b3. The knight aims for b5, practically forcing White

ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2014

ACO Amateur Chess Organization

07th - 16th June 2014 - Rhodes (Greece)

Prizefund 5.000 EUR (21 prizes) / 9 rounds Swiss System

4 and 5 star hotels with All-Inclusive or half board

1000 m2 playing hall

230 players from 30 countries registered

The tournament will be played in 7 groups:
A: 2201 – 2400 B: 2001 – 2200 C: 1801 – 2000
D: 1601 – 1800 E: 1401 – 1600 F: 1201 – 1400
G: 0 – 1200
Contact & registration: rhodes@amateurchess.com
2013
168 players
Already more than 230 registrations from 30 countries for 2014
Limited places
www.amateurchess.com/rhodes

NEW IN CHESS

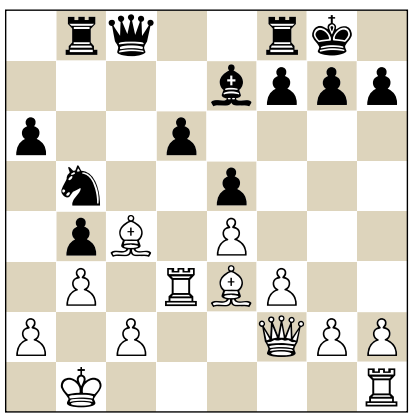
Sergey Karjakin: 'I'd also like to thank our "secret masseur", who always helped us to tune up for a game, and to relax after it.'

to exchange his bishop for it. At this point I realized that the position was again unclear. The clock times had become equal, and I think that I devised a sensible plan of giving up my bishop and then playing c3. However, it would appear that the way to gain a clear advantage had already been missed.

18.♗c4

Things were not so clear after 18.♗a7 ♖a8 19.♗b6 ♖b8 20.♗a5 ♘f6 21.♗c4 ♕b7 22.c3 bxc3 23.♗xc3 ♖fc8 24.♕e2 ♕b6, with complicated play.

18...♘c7 19.♖d3 ♘b5

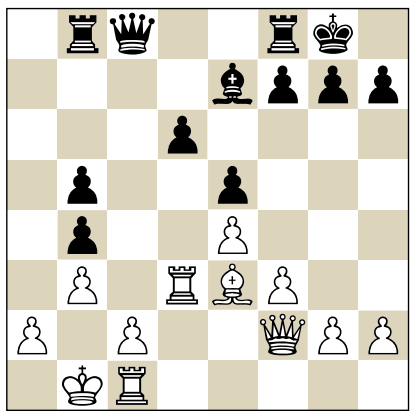


20.♗xb5 axb5!

A dynamic decision! After 20...♖xb5 21.♖hd1 Black has a passive and slightly inferior position, whereas after the move in the game the a-file is opened, and the play becomes much sharper.

21.♖c1

But not 21.♗d2? d5! 22.♖xd5 ♖a8, when White can no longer withstand this attack.



21...f5!

Again the correct decision! Eltaj sharpens the play, but he left himself short of time on the clock, and later this told.

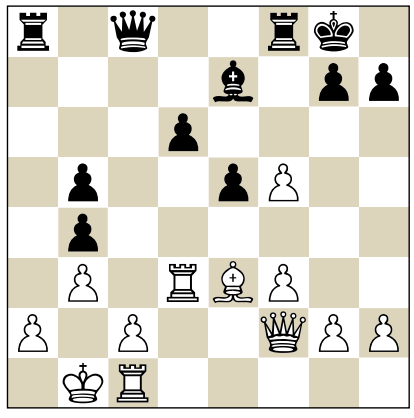
After 21...♕a6 22.c3 bxc3 23.♖dxc3 b4 24.♖c7 ♖b7 25.♕d2 White is slightly better..

22.exf5!?

Also quite ambitious. The quieter 22.♕e2 fxe4 23.fxe4 ♕d8 was possible, when White is slightly better, but there is still all to play for.

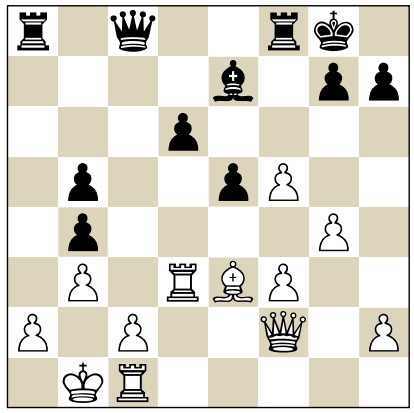
22...♖a8!

Again the correct decision! Before White has succeeded in playing c3, Black creates counterplay against the a2-pawn.



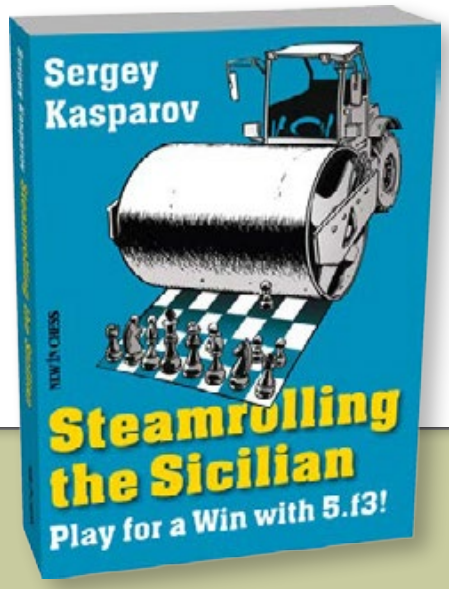
23.g4?!

This move should have led to a forced draw, but I did not see anything better. In the time scramble it was hard to find the strongest continuation 23.♕e2! ♕b7 24.c3 e4 25.fxe4 ♕xe4. After calculating this far I did not see any way to gain an advantage, but there is the strong 26.♖c2! bxc3 27.♗d4! ♕xf5 28.♗xc3, when White retains pressure. Thus, despite Black's enterprising play, White had a way to gain an advantage, albeit not an easy one.



23...d5?!

A key moment in the game. Here Eltaj clearly became carried away and he allowed White to retain his extra pawn. Black's move and all his subsequent ones are quite active and enter-



"An excellent overview of an interesting variation."
Joe Petrolito, Australasian Chess Magazine

"The book is light and easy-going. The author emphasizes the pragmatic nature of the proposed repertoire: less to learn, avoiding 'pet lines', strategically sound, and so on. An original book."
GM Glenn Flear, Yearbook 109

"The idea behind this: avoid theoretical battles and surprise your opponent. Furthermore, after playing 5.f3 it is almost impossible to end up in a position that is not solid."
Martin Rieger, SchachWelt

"A decent alternative to surprise a well-armed opponent. The book as a whole is enthusiastically written and there are many new ideas."
Carsten Hansen, ChessCafe

"The author is not related to Garry but he is a fine writer. There are plenty of games demonstrating how White can extract a slight edge against popular lines. A nice Sicilian repertoire."
IM Gary Lane, Chess Moves Magazine

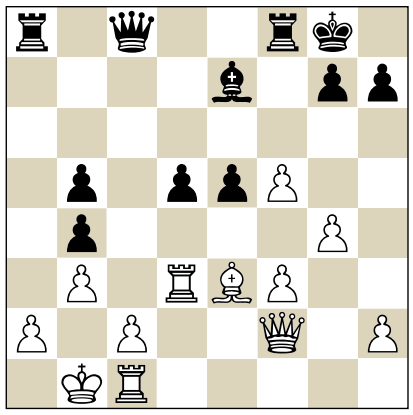
"*Steamrolling the Sicilian* has not, of course, refuted the Sicilian, because that is impossible, but (..) the typical Black counterplay is being effectively neutralised."
Johan Hut, Noord-Hollands Dagblad

♦

paperback ♦ 240 pages ♦ €23.95
available at your local (chess)bookseller
or at www.newinchess.com

prising, but here he objectively stands badly.

During the game I was looking at 23...♖xa2 24.♔xa2 ♕a6+ 25.♔b1 ♖a8 26.c3 ♕a1+ 27.♔c2 ♖a2+ 28.♔d1 ♖xf2 29.♖xa1 ♖f1+ 30.♔e2 ♖xa1 31.cxb4 ♖h1 32.♖d5 ♖xh2+ 33.♔d3 ♖b2, and here I tried to find winning chances, but probably Black is making a draw without big problems.



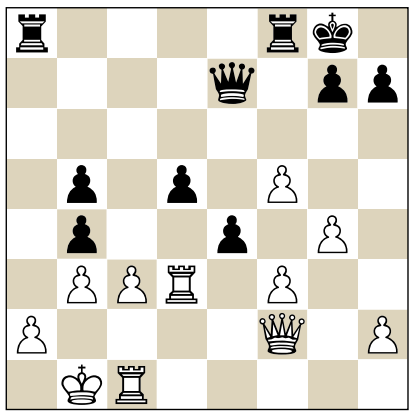
24.c3!

Simple and strong! Now White is a pawn up and it can definitely be said that only two results are possible. Of course, not 24.♖xd5? ♖xa2 25.♔xa2 ♕a8+ 26.♔b1 ♕xd5, and Black becomes very active.

24...♕b7 25.♗c5!

Exchanging bishops and taking play into a heavy piece endgame with an obvious advantage.

25...e4 26.♗xe7 ♕xe7



27.fxe4?!

Another attempt to spoil everything! In my justification I should mention that my opponent had no more than a couple of minutes left and I did not want to allow him the easier play after 27.♖xd5 e3 28.♕e2 ♖fd8 29.♖xd8+ ♖xd8, although the computer reckons that after the simple 30.cxb4 White should win. For example, 30...♖d2 31.♕xb5 e2 32.♖c8+ ♔f7 33.♕c4+ ♔f6 34.g5+! ♔xf5 (34...♔xg5 35.h4+ ♔xf5 36.♕g4+ and wins) 35.♖c5+ ♔g6 36.♖c6+, and if 36...♖d6 37.♖xd6+ ♕xd6 38.♕xe2. But, of course, it is difficult to calculate such variations in time-trouble, and I restricted myself to a more practical decision.

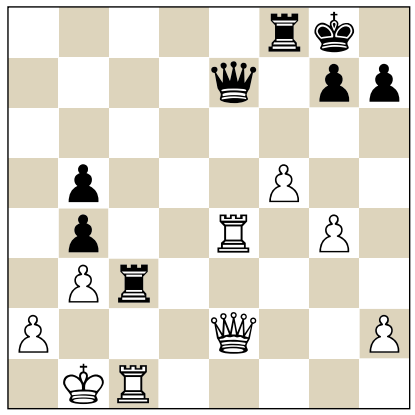
27...dxe4 28.♖e3 ♖ac8 29.♕e2

It is possible that 29.♕e1! was slightly more accurate.

29...♖xc3

29...bxc3 30.♖exc3 ♖xc3 31.♖xc3 ♕e5 was more accurate, when White has enormous difficulties in converting his extra pawn.

30.♖xe4



White appears to be a sound pawn to the good, and in view of the fact that my opponent now had less than a minute, I thought that I was very

Antalya 2013

		MP	BP
1	Russia	15	23
2	China	14	22
3	Ukraine	14	21
4	USA	10	20½
5	Armenia	10	20
6	Netherlands	9	17
7	Germany	8	17
8	Azerbaijan	7	18
9	Turkey	3	12
10	Egypt	0	9½

10 teams, 9 rounds

promisingly placed, but if an objective view is taken, Black can set up a very resilient defence, exploiting the poor covering of the white king.

30...♖xc1+ 31.♔xc1 ♕d7?!

The immediate 31...♕d6 was more accurate.

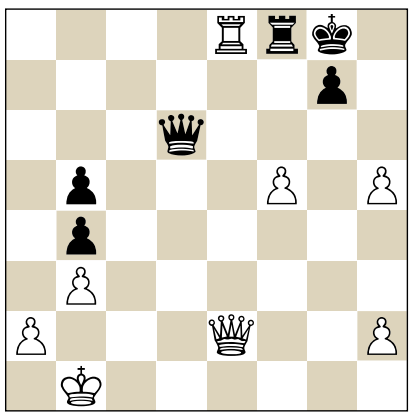
32.♔b1 ♕d6

Black should probably have made an escape square for his king with 32...h6.

33.♖e8! h5

Black fails to save the game with 33...g6 34.♕e6+! ♕xe6 35.♖xf8+ ♔xf8 36.fxe6 ♔e7 37.♔b2 ♔xe6 38.a4.

34.gxh5



34...♕d7

In time-trouble Eltaj overlooks the exchange of queens. The last chance was the hard-to-find 34...♕d4!, but even here after the accurate 35.h6! (but not 35.♕e6+?! ♔h7 36.♖xf8?? ♕d1+, with a perpetual) 35...♕g1+ 36.♕e1 ♕xe1+ 37.♖xe1 gxh6 38.♖e5 White is most probably winning.

35.♕e6+ ♕xe6 36.♖xf8+ ♔xf8 37.fxe6 ♔e7 38.♔c2 ♔xe6 39.♔d3 ♔d5 40.♔e3 ♔e5 41.h3

Black resigned.

A game which, although not ideal, was important from the competitive point of view. After a terrible start our team managed to overcome the poor run, and, after winning a difficult match, began gradually to come into form, round by round displaying its potential. For which, of course, credit goes to my team-mates and trainers, who worked very harmoniously. And also our 'secret masseur', who always helped us to tune up for a game, and to relax after it.

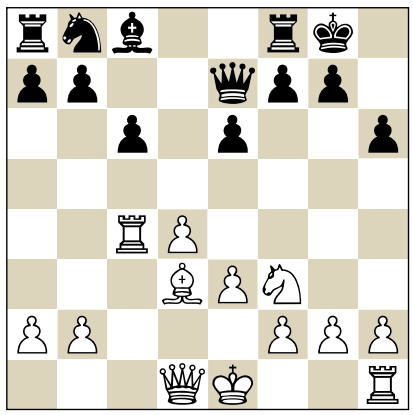
NOTES BY
Anish Giri

QO 14.15 – D56
Levon Aronian
Hikaru Nakamura
Antalya 2013 (3)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♗e7

Modern chess is such that sometimes even Hikaru plays solid.

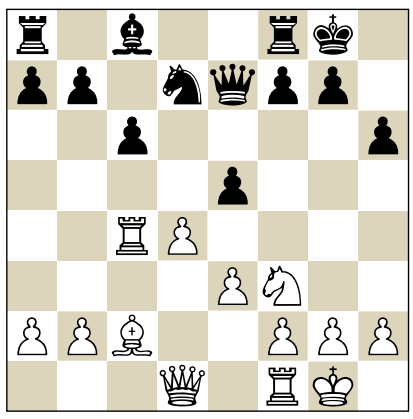
5.♘c3 h6 6.♗h4 0-0 7.e3 ♘e4 8.♗xe7 ♕xe7 9.♖c1 c6 10.♗d3 ♘xc3 11.♖xc3 dxc4 12.♖xc4



This move has been out of fashion for a while, as far as I know, but then again, if you play something fashionable against the Queen's Gambit, most likely you will get neutralized without any thought. Literally.

12...♘d7 13.0-0 e5 14.♗c2

A new idea that Levon found after 10 sleepless nights together with the whole Armenian national team, a coach and three cooks who had to cook them extra nutritious meals to keep them all awake. Just kidding, it's the first choice of the computer. Duh.

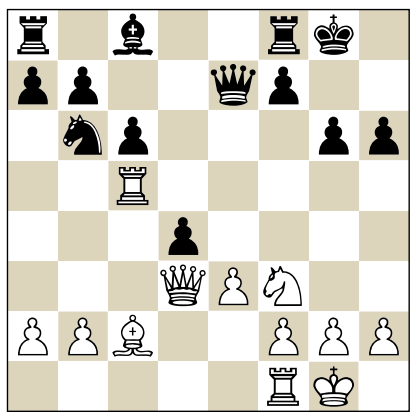


14...♘b6 I don't know what is the best for Black here, but even if I did, I would not tell you here. I would only sell this information for a draw with Levon with the black pieces.

15.♖c5 exd4 When I was passing by their board, I felt that 15...♘d7 back was more natural. But the move in the game is logical as well.

'A new idea that Levon found after 10 sleepless nights together with the whole Armenian national team, a coach and three cooks who had to cook them extra nutritious meals to keep them all awake.'

16.♕d3 g6



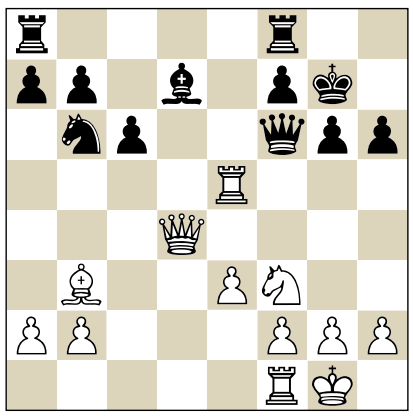
17.♗b3

A little unpleasant when such moves are being played a tempo, but by now we all have got used to that, I assume.

17...♔g7 A bad blunder is 17...♕xc5?? 18.♕xg6+ ♔h8 19.♕xh6+ ♔g8 20.e4, followed by ♘g5, with mate.

18.♕xd4+ ♕f6 19.♖e5 ♗d7

Levon Aronian (performance rating 2896!) introduced a new idea and kept the pressure till the end. 'Apparently, if you are able to do exactly that, even the most stubborn player, even Hikaru, can collapse.'

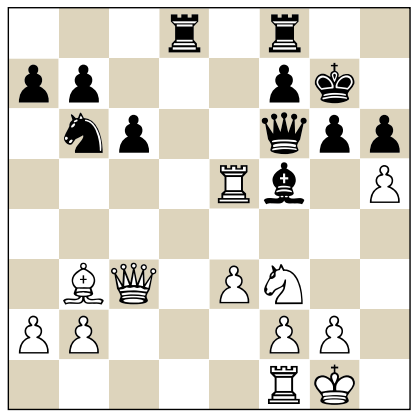


20.h4

And even this was played without thinking. And while it's not really dangerous, of course White's idea contains some venom, and what more can one hope for?

20...♖ad8 21.h5 ♗f5 22.♕c3

White has managed to touch Black a little on the kingside, but Black has a decent position and shouldn't be experiencing any serious difficulties. Yet the pressure is a little annoying, so Hikaru decides to force matters.

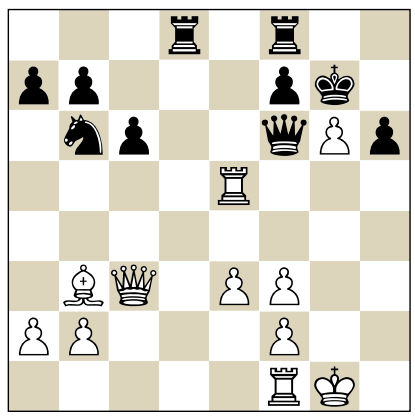


22...♗g4

Objectively this may not be the best, but then again, do you really want me to blame Hikaru for not playing ...a7-a6? Yes, that's indeed the best move according to the mightiest power in the chess world.

22...♘d7 23.♖a5 ♕xc3 24.bxc3 is close to equal as well, but still a little nasty.

23.hxg6 ♗xf3 24.gxf3



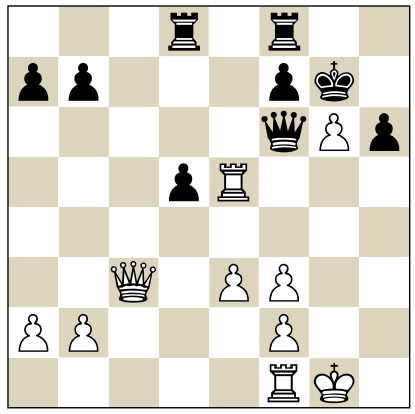
24...♘d5

I remember that when passing by again I assumed Hikaru was planning 24...♘d7!? 25.♖e7 (25.♖a5! keeps some pressure) 25...♔xg6!, which is indeed possible: 26.♗c2+ ♔g7 27.♖d1 ♕xc3 28.bxc3 ♘c5, and this looks fine.

25.♗xd5

In the position with major pieces that arises, it quickly becomes clear that Black still has some problems to solve.

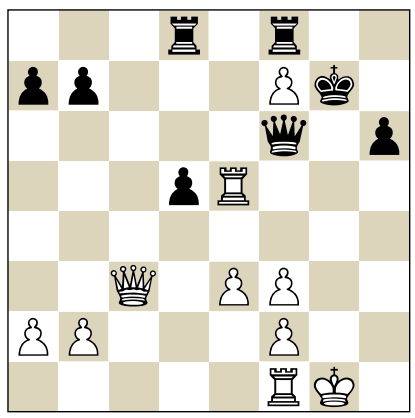
25...cxd5



26.gxf7

Maybe not the best.

26.♖d1!? fxg6 27.♖e7+ ♖f7 28.♖xf7+ ♔xf7 29.♖d4 poses serious problems. White's king is in fact much safer than its black counterpart and the d5-pawn is a clear target.



26...d4

An understandable desire to break up the pawn structure, but it's still a pawn.

Instead, 26...♖c8!? leads by force to an unpleasant but maybe defendable rook endgame: 27.♖e6 ♖xc3 28.♖xf6, and now for example 28...♖xe3!? 29.fxe3 ♔xf6, and Black restores the material balance, which doesn't mean, however, that his suffering is over: 30.♖d1 ♔e6 31.♔f2 ♖xf7 32.♖h1 ♖f6 33.♖h5, and Black is pinned down to a passive defence.

26...♔xf7!? doesn't lose either. In fact, that was the move I was expecting to see during the game, while passing by.

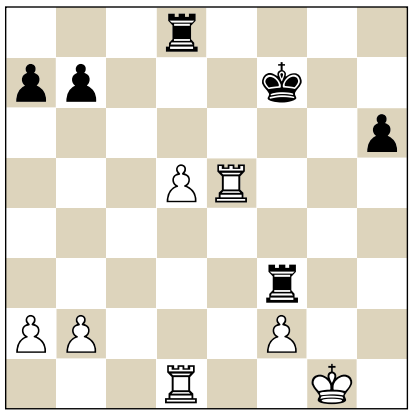
27.exd4 ♖xf7 28.d5

White had alternatives, but either way his winning chances are quite serious.

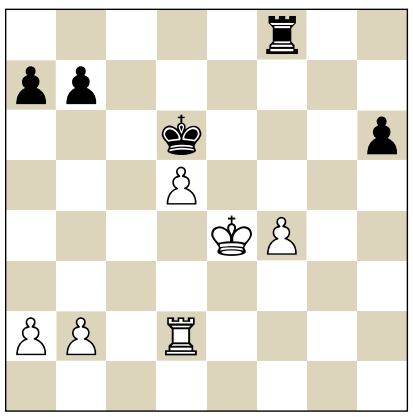
28...♕xf3 29.♕xf3 ♖xf3 30.♖d1

The endgame is the usual 50/50 story. On 30.♔g2 Black plays 30...♖d3!.

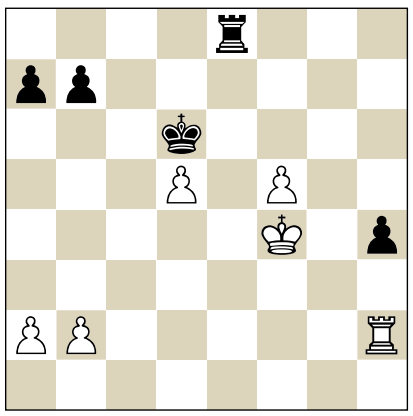
30...♔f7



31.♖d4 31.♔g2, and as every Russian school boy knows... ☺. But OK, maybe Levon knows better.
31...♖e8! 32.♖xe8 ♔xe8 33.♔g2 ♖f5 34.f4 ♔d7 35.♔f3 ♔d6 36.♔e4 ♖f8 37.♖d2



Both players are in their element. Hikaru is finding the best defensive moves, while Levon is seemingly effortlessly setting him problems.
37...h5 Hikaru was already in time-trouble, so it's hard to judge him harshly here.
37...♖e8+! seems to be holding at first sight: 38.♔f5 ♖f8+ 39.♔g4 ♖g8+ 40.♔h5 ♖f8 41.♖f2 ♖f6, and it looks like it's a draw, but of course it's hard to tell without delving much more deeply into the endgame.
38.f5 h4 39.♖h2 ♖e8+ 40.♔f4

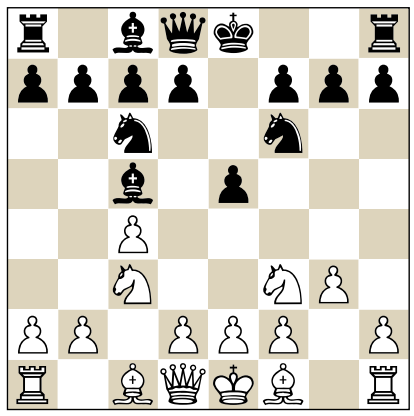


40...♖h8??
This move loses. What was it that Hikaru had missed? Well, there are many things to be missed. Frankly, I only realized that he had blundered when he started shaking his head – the endgame is terribly complicated.
He should have tried 40...♔xd5 41.♖xh4 (White can't win by force, even though he is very close: 41.♖d2+ ♔c6 42.f6 h3 43.♔f5 ♖e1 44.f7 ♖f1+ 45.♔e6 ♖e1+ 46.♔f6 ♖f1+ 47.♔e7 ♖e1+ 48.♔f8 ♖f1, and strangely enough, even with the black pawn only on the 3rd rank, the position is a draw) 41...♖e2, with good drawing chances. Although it's at least on the edge, if you ask me.
41.f6!
Now the white king just penetrates and the f-pawn queens.
41...♖e8 42.♖xh4
Black resigned.
A good victory by Levon, who introduced a new idea (remember the three cooks?) and kept the pressure till the end. Apparently, if you are able to do exactly that, even the most stubborn player, even Hikaru, can collapse.

NOTES BY
Ian Nepomniachtchi

EO 4.3 - A29
Ian Nepomniachtchi
Yury Kryvoruchko
Antalya 2013 (8)

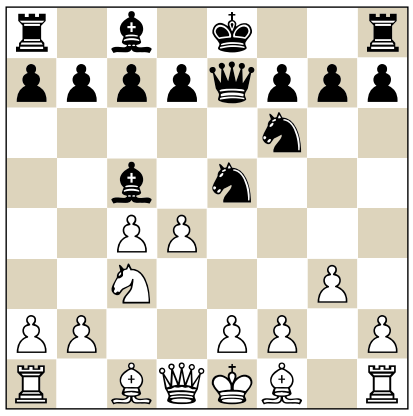
It is no secret that for some players (and, incidentally, from time to time also for me) the most important question is one of motivation. In many respects it is this that determines the result in a particular tournament: it is difficult to play constantly at full intensity. Fortunately, in team events (especially those in which you are entrusted with defending the honour of your country) this problem is completely absent: every player strives to perform as well as possible and to bring the team important points.
Initially I was off-form, but willpower combined with considerable luck enabled me to emerge unscathed after a terrible blunder against Sargissian, and in the match with China an unjustified risk brought victory in the game and in the match. After Ukraine, who had been winning match after match, stumbled against the Dutch, our chances of catching and overtaking the leaders ceased to be theoretical. Thus, in Round 8 Russia met the Ukrainian team, who were one match point ahead of us. I was entrusted with the white pieces in my game with the 2013 Ukrainian champion Yury Kryvoruchko.
1.c4
I chose the opening after lengthy and agonizing thought, but the collective wisdom voted for a lengthy struggle plus the minimal probability of running into forced simplification at the very start of the game.
1...e5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.g3 ♗c5
An interesting move, although it has always seemed to me that 4...d5, 4...♗b4 and 4...♘d4 are all preferable from the standpoint of fighting for equality.



5.♘xe5
This is undoubtedly far more critical than the quiet ♗g2. In general, of course, the English is not an opening where forcing variations are of paramount importance, but this continuation stands somewhat apart.
5...♘xe5
Tastes differ, but this is supposedly considered the main continuation. (Others may argue that 5...♗xf2+ is

the main continuation, e.g. 6.♔xf2 ♘xe5 7.e4 c5 8.d4 cxd4 9.♕xd4 0-0, as in Ivanchuk-Anand, 1999, and Gelfand-Svidler, 2010 – ed.)

6.d4 ♕e7



7.dxe5 It was also possible to defend against the pretty mate by 7.♗g2, but this is also not bad.

7...♕xe5 This unpretentious move was not considered by our team of trainers: all efforts were devoted to the knight leap to g4, leading, as it is customary to say, to wild complications.

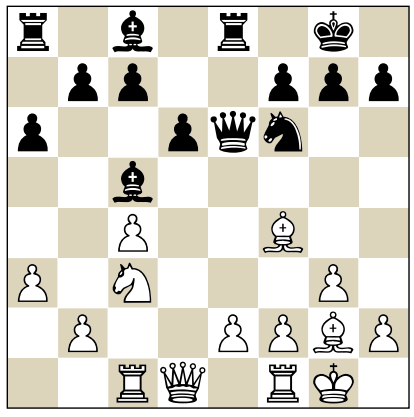
8.♗g2 d6 9.♗f4

It is very desirable to determine the intentions of the black queen, since if White castles it will head to h5 and will play on his nerves.

9...♕e6 10.♖c1 0-0 11.a3

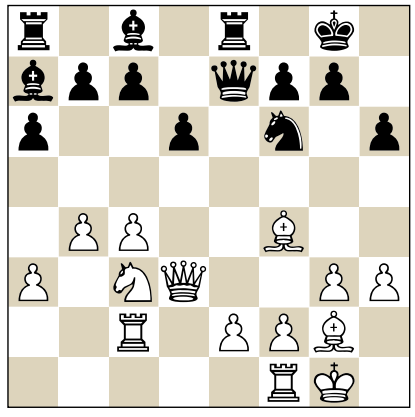
Perhaps an unnecessary subtlety, but in the event of 11.0-0 ♕xc4 12.♘d5 ♕xa2 I did not see a forced win for White, and there is no need to change sharply this type of position.

11...a6 12.0-0 ♖e8



The outcome of the opening can be summed up: Black has played very solidly, but extremely modestly, and he has ended up in a cramped position. White's play is simple, but there are too many logical strengthening moves, and there will probably not be sufficient time to make all of them.

13.♖c2 h6 14.b4 ♗a7 15.♕d3 ♕e7 16.h3



Restricting the c8-bishop and preventing its possible manoeuvre via g4 and h5 to the comparatively satisfactory square g6.

Judit Polgar's Chess Set, by DGT

Fine handcrafted set, specially selected by Judit Polgar
A very personal selection of chess pieces
Packed in a beautiful wooden box
Chess board signed 'Polgar Judit – the Queen of Chess'

Judit Polgar chess pieces:
King height 95 mm (3.74") with two extra queens

Judit Polgar Chess Board:
500 x 500 x 13mm (19.7" x 19.7" x .51")
Tournament size squares:
55 x 55 mm (2.17" x 2.17")

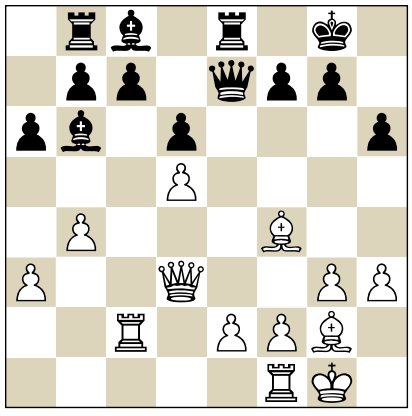
DGT

normal price: board €139, pieces €89
special New In Chess price: board + pieces = ~~€228~~ **€199**
www.newinchess.com

16...♖b8 17.♘d5

It is hard to say whether or not this is over-hasty, but after ...♗e6 I didn't want Black to be able to exchange his passive light-squared bishop.

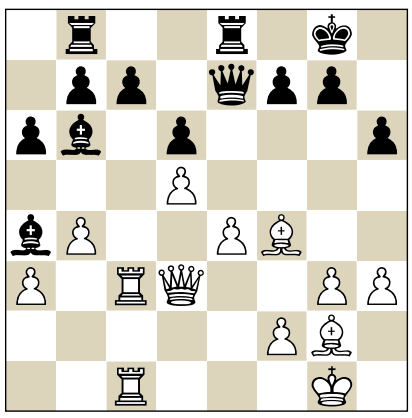
17...♘xd5 18.cxd5 ♗b6



19.e4?!

After 19.a4 a5 20.b5 it is very difficult for Black to find a move: his queenside is tightly fixed, whereas White can strengthen his position and prepare a breakthrough in the centre. For example, 20...♗c5 is bad in view of 21.♖xc5! dxc5 22.d6, and Black collapses. He is virtually forced to play ...♖a8, but this move looks rather artificial. However, Black's position is still very solid, and White faces a lengthy siege of the enemy defences.

19...♗d7 20.♖fc1 ♗a4 21.♖c3



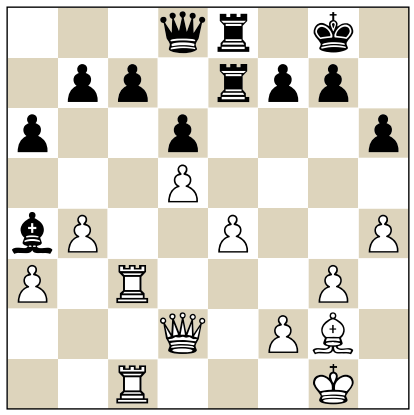
Now also White is strategically better, but since after ...c6 Black has practically no vulnerable points, the position has an obvious tendency towards full equality.

21...♖bd8 22.♗e3 ♗xe3 23.♕xe3 ♖d7 Somewhat passive; 23...c6 was more logical.

24.♕d2

I was planning a regrouping, in order after ...c7-c6 to choose between an exchange sacrifice and an attempt to call the opponent to account by quieter means, by pressing on the d6-pawn.

24...♕d8 25.h4 ♖de7



26.♖c4

Perhaps 26.♗f3 was more shrewd, in order after 26...c6 27.dxc6 ♗xc6 28.♖xc6 bxc6 29.♖xc6 d5 30.exd5 to cover the e2-point, restricting Black's possible counterplay.

26...c6 27.♖d4

In this version the exchange sacrifice seems more risky, and so I decided to play more quietly.

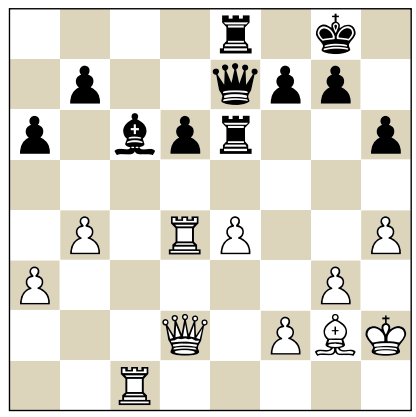
27...cxd5 28.♖xd5 ♖e6 29.♖d4

29.e5 ♖xe5 30.♖xd6 simplifies the position, although even here the white pieces are much better placed, and the pressure is retained.

29...♕e7 30.♔h2

Not a mistake, but with the king on g1 it would look slightly safer to play f3.

30...♗c6



31.♖cc4?!

The wrong move, but it was not easy to decide on 31.f3, in view of the various pawn thrusts followed by the invasion of the rook on the second rank. Now the white rooks are awkwardly placed, and Black can create serious counterplay by ...g7-g5.

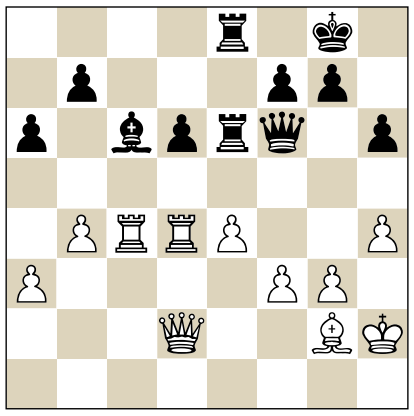
31...♕f6

31...g5!.

32.f3

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

'Those are the peculiarities of Nepomniachtchi's style. When he wants a piece to go somewhere, it gets there very quickly. Ian turns his desire into an existing fact.'



32...♕e7?

After 32...g5! it is now White who has to play accurately, since Black has chances of taking over the initiative. In general the play remains within the bounds of equality: 33.♗h3 ♕xf3 34.♗xe6 ♖xe6 35.hxg5 ♗xe4 36.♖xe4 with drawing features.

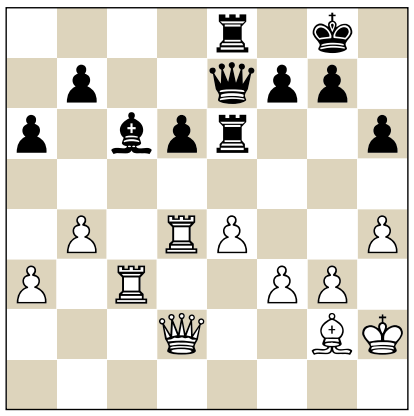
Now, however, I acquired the opportunity to revert to the correct plan.

33.♖c2 It is important to cover the second rank.

33...♗a4

Forcing the rook to make up its mind: either the second rank, or the c-file.

34.♖c3 ♗c6 Time was short, and so my opponent acted with exaggerated safety. However, to all appearances the moment for creating counterplay had already been missed.

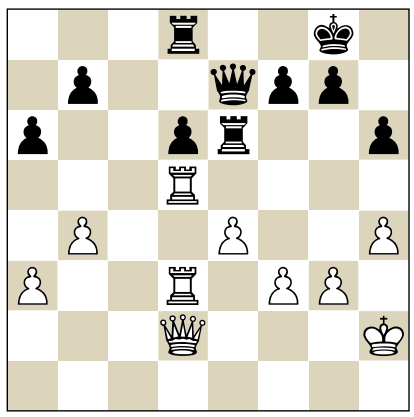


35.♗f1! A strong tempo-gaining manoeuvre of the bishop to d5, which at the same time creates the threat of capturing on a6.

35...♖f6 36.♗c4 ♖d8 37.♗d5

It was also possible to begin with 37.♔g2, intensifying the threats, but after 37...d5!? Black would have rid himself of his weakness and obtained a comfortable blockading set-up with a rook on d6. I did not want to allow this, since, in my view, with material equal and the opponent having an impregnable pawn structure, it is far more unpleasant for Black to defend.

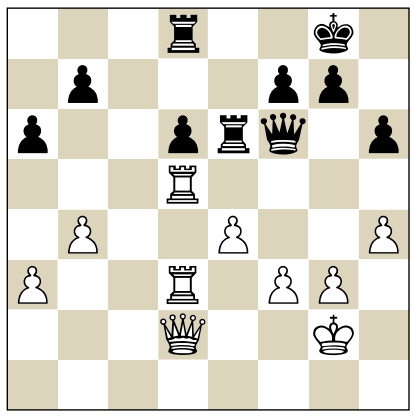
37...♗xd5 38.♖xd5 ♖e6 39.♖cd3



Black is tied to the defence of the isolated pawn.

39...♕f6 40.♔g2

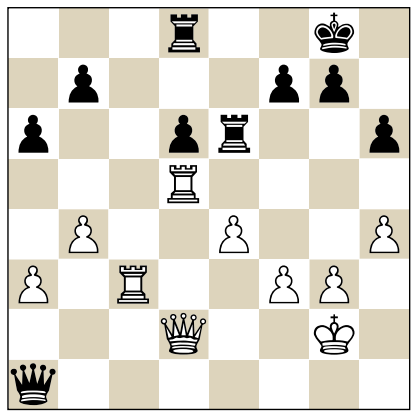
Here it occurred to me that it would not be bad if Yury were to decide to activate his queen, but it was very hard to believe that he would do this. Just too good to be true, as they say. Therefore, after making the last move before the time control I was about to go off for a cup of tea, since the game promised to be quite a long one, when suddenly there followed:



40...♕a1?? One can understand Black's desire to play actively, especially since in the event of passive defence a draw is by no means guaranteed: White advances his pawns on the kingside, and then on the queenside, creating a second weakness. I think that the percentage chances of a win for White and a draw for Black (bearing in mind that it is people who are playing, not computers) are somewhere in the region of 65 to 35. However, there are as many opinions as there are people. But now Black's strongest piece gets into trouble.

41.♖c3

The queen would like to return to its own forces, but there is no way back...



41...♖de8

The lesser evil was 41...a5, when at least Black avoids losing his queen immediately by giving up a pawn or two, but, of course, this is not a panacea: his position remains hopeless.

42.♕c2

There is no defence against the threat of 43.♖d1, and so Black resigned.

A rather dry, tedious game, not without its mistakes, but that makes it no less important in the competitive sense! Of course, it was immensely pleasant to bring our team victory in the key match, but I endeavoured not to display any wild delight.

I was tormented by vague doubts...

In the last, decisive 9th round a match with Egypt awaited us... ☺

P.S. Thank you to Volodya Potkin, who persuaded me to venture 5.♘xe5! ☺

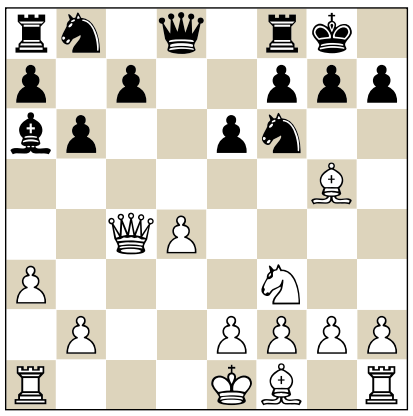
'P.S. Thank you to Volodya Potkin, who persuaded me to venture 5.♘xe5!'

NOTES BY
Hikaru Nakamura

NI 20.3 – E32
Hikaru Nakamura
Vladimir Kramnik
Antalya 2013 (2)

Playing top tournaments is always fun, but I feel that team events and in particular big matches against teams like Russia bring out something extra special in my play.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.♕c2 0-0 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.♕xc3 d5 7.♘f3 dxc4 8.♕xc4 b6 9.♗g5 ♗a6



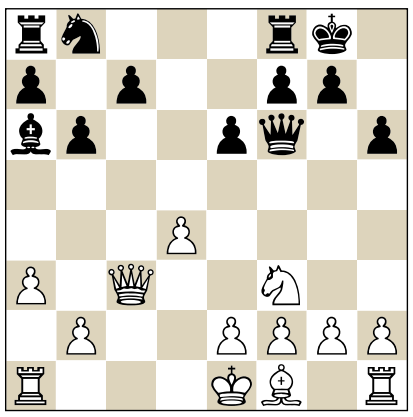
10.♕c3!?

A new try. 10.♕a4 has been tried against Kramnik twice by Mamedyarov, but in both cases Black easily obtained equality.

10...h6 11.♗xf6

After 11.♗h4 g5 12.♗g3 ♘e4 13.♕c2 ♕d5 14.♘d2 ♘xd2 15.♕xd2 ♘c6 Black was completely fine in Maiorov-Lekic, Anogia Open 2013.

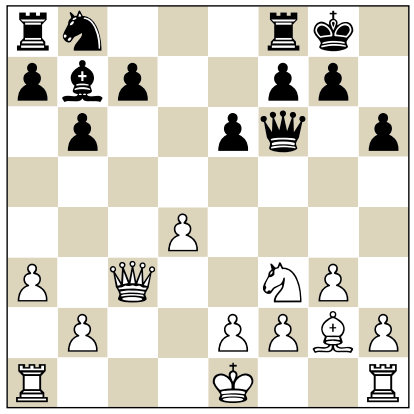
11...♕xf6



12.g3

Grabbing the pawn with 12.♕xc7 might be playable, but without preparation it seems very dangerous: 12...♖c8 13.♕e5 ♕d8 and Black should definitely have enough compensation for the sacrificed pawn and maybe more.

12...♗b7 13.♗g2

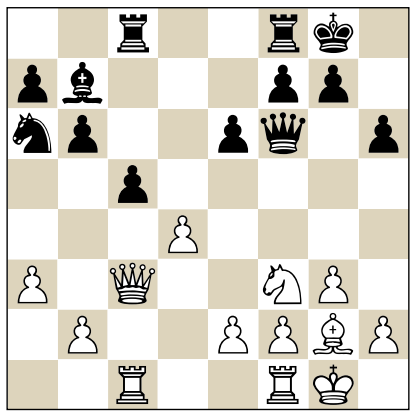


13...♘a6?!

A natural-looking move which prepares ...c5 but causes long-term strategic problems. The knight was better placed on d7.

14.0-0 c5 15.♖ac1 ♖ac8

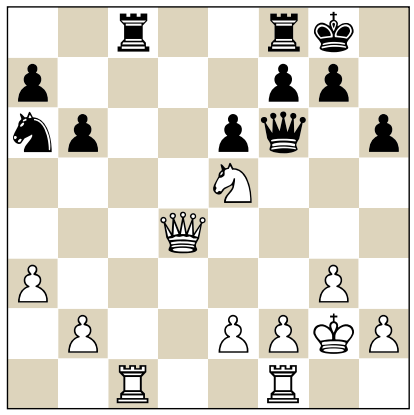
After 15...♖fd8 16.dxc5 ♘xc5 17.♕xf6 gxf6 18.b4 ♘e4 19.♖c7 ♗a6 the position should be approximately equal with precise play.



16.♘e5

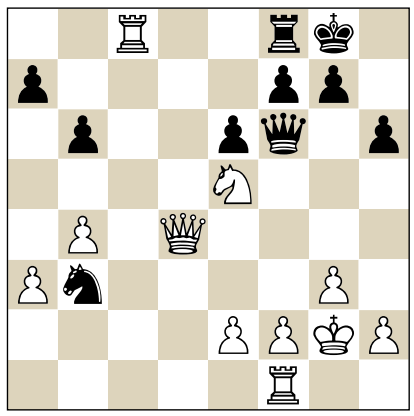
Up until this point, Kramnik had been playing relatively quickly. However, for the next couple of moves he used a lot of time. This was a clear sign that he felt slightly uncomfortable with his position. It also reminded me of a Kasparov comment about how Kramnik started sensing and seeing danger in positions before it was there. In this case, I think it worked in my favour.

16...cxd4 17.♕xd4 ♗xg2 18.♔xg2



Material is equal, but the looming problems of the knight on a6 as well as the c6-square are very apparent even at this early stage of the middlegame.

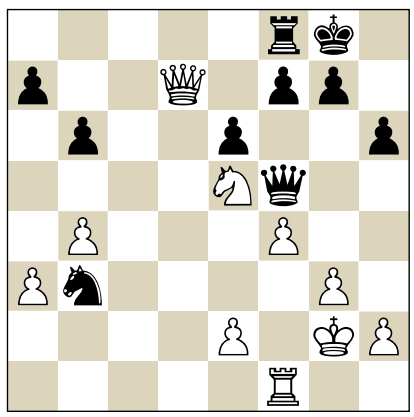
18...♘c5 19.b4 ♘b3 20.♖xc8



20...♖xc8

After 20...♘xd4 21.♖xf8+ ♔h7 22.♘xf7 ♕f5 23.f3! Black can play on, but it feels like this should be a technical win.

21.♕d7 ♖f8 22.f4 ♕f5



23.♖f3

Stronger was 23.♖d1! ♕c2 (on 23...a5 24.♕c6 is a crushing move as e4

One brand, two apps

Magazine

New In Chess *Digital*: the chess **magazine** that moves. Subscribers in 97 countries receive eight issues per year with more than 800 pages of chess delight. Now on your iPad, complete with the interactive chess viewer: easy to operate, faster service, more instructional value and much more fun.

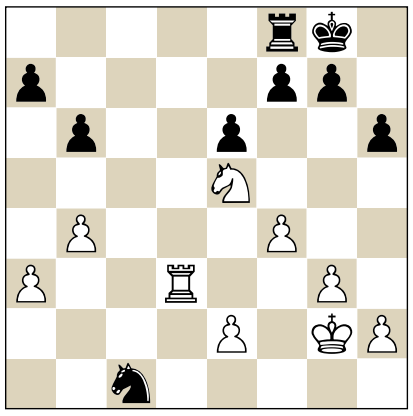
Books & Files

Read our interactive **books and files** anywhere, following every move simultaneously on the built-in board. Our books install in seconds on you iPad, are complete, have all the right features, are simple to operate and make reading, studying and training so much easier and more effective.

Two New In Chess apps: different design, same quality

followed by ♕c2 and also ♘d7 are unstoppable threats) 24.♔f2 ♘c1 25.♕d2 ♕xd2 26.♖xd2 f6 (26...♖c8 was the move I was worried about, as I saw ideas of ...♖c2 coming. However, as the computers show, there is nothing to be afraid of!: 27.♖d6 ♖c2 28.♖d8+ ♔h7 29.♘xf7 ♘xe2 30.♔e3 and White is clearly winning) 27.♘c6, and White should be close to winning, with correct play.

23...♕c2 24.♕d3 ♕xd3 25.♖xd3 ♘c1

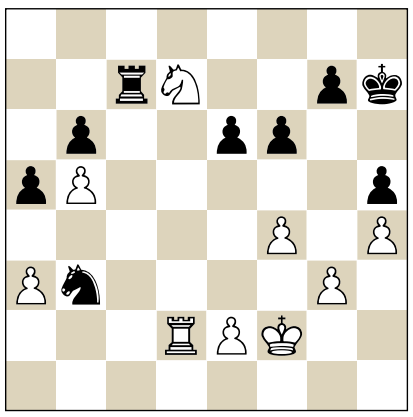


26.♖d2?!

Losing the plot. Around this point, I was trying to keep it too clean and simple and just win the knight on c1. However, the task is very difficult.

Correct was 26.♖d7 ♘xe2 27.♖xa7 f6 28.♘d7 ♖c8 29.♘xb6 ♖c2 30.♔f3 ♘d4+ 31.♔e4 ♘f5 32.g4 ♘d6+ 33.♔d3 ♖xh2 34.a4, when some precise play is still required, but even this endgame should be clearly winning.

26...♖c8 27.h4 h5 28.b5 ♖c7 29.♘c6 ♔h7 30.♖b2 a5 31.♔f2 ♖d7 32.♘e5 ♖c7 33.♖d2 f6 34.♘d7 ♘b3



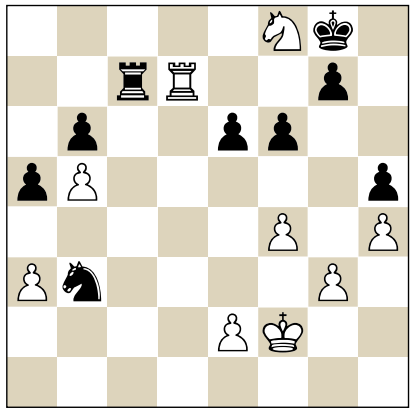
35.♘f8+

The obvious move was 35.♖d6, but this leads to simplification and a well known ending: 35...♘c5 36.♘xc5 ♖xc5 37.♖xb6 ♖c3 38.a4 ♖a3 39.♖xe6 ♖xa4 40.♖a6 ♖a3 41.b6 ♔g6 42.e4

> 'I am sure that somewhere out there, Bobby must have been smiling.'

♖b3 43.♔e2 a4 44.♔d2 a3 45.♔c2 ♖b5 46.♔c3 a2 47.♔c4 ♖xb6 48.♖xa2. White remains up a pawn, but this remains a theoretical draw.

35...♔g8 36.♖d7



36...♖xd7?

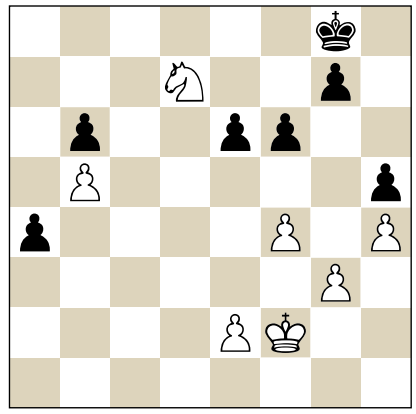
The losing move. Kramnik played the next three moves very quickly.

He should have played 36...♖c3 37.♘xe6 ♘c5 38.♖xg7+ (or 38.♘xc5 ♖xc5 39.a4 ♖c4 40.♖d6 ♖xa4 41.♖xb6 ♖b4 with the same ending as in the variation with 35.♖d6) 38...♔h8 39.♖e7 ♘e4+ 40.♔f1 ♘xg3+ 41.♔e1 ♖xa3 42.♘d4, when White remains significantly better but there are still plenty of practical chances.

37.♘xd7 ♘d4 38.a4 ♘xb5

The position after 38...♔f7 39.♘xb6 ♔e7 40.♘c4 ♘b3 41.♔e3 is also completely hopeless for Black.

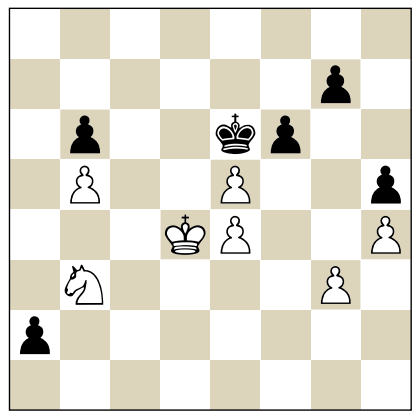
39.axb5 a4



40.♘c5! The move Kramnik missed.

40...a3 In case of 40...bxc5 41.b6 a3 42.b7 a2 43.b8♕+ White queens first, with check!

41.♘b3 a2 42.♔e3 ♔f7 43.♔d4 ♔e7 44.e4 e5+ 45.fxe5 ♔e6



46.♘a1!

The cleanest way. In many ways the various knight moves remind me of the previous game from the Olympiad, where I underpromoted a pawn to a knight. My games with Kramnik seem to involve many knight ideas!

The line after 46.exf6 also wins, but I wanted to avoid complications or possible errors at this point: 46...gxf6 47.♔d3 ♔e5 48.♔e3 f5 49.exf5 ♔xf5 50.♔f3 ♔e5 51.g4 hxg4+ 52.♔xg4 ♔d5 53.h5 ♔c4 54.♘a1 ♔c3 55.h6 ♔b2 56.h7 ♔xa1 57.h8♕+ ♔b1 58.♕h6 ♔b2 59.♕xb6 a1♕ 60.♕f6+ ♔b1 61.♕xa1+ ♔xa1 62.b6, winning.

46...fxe5+ 47.♔c3 g5 48.♔b2 gxh4 49.gxh4 ♔d6 50.♘b3

I simply pick off the a2-pawn and then come back to the centre with my king, as there are no entry squares.

A victory, but more importantly a win over Russia!

I am sure that somewhere out there, Bobby must have been smiling. ■

Lothar Schmid

‘The collection was his life’

PHOTOS NEW IN CHESS

During his lifetime, the stories about the chess library of Lothar Schmid, immense in size and containing the rarest of books, took on mythical proportions. Especially amongst collectors it was a constant source of marvel and speculation. Now, following Schmid’s death at the age of 85 on May 18th of last year, the biggest private chess collection in the world is up for sale. The Schmid heirs are looking for someone willing to buy it in its entirety and prepared to fork out the price they have in mind. So far, their search has been in vain, but perhaps an article in New In Chess will catch the attention of the person or institution they are hoping for. Offered the opportunity to inspect the legendary library, **Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam** travelled to Bamberg to see the lifework of an obsessed and tireless hunter whose passion for collecting literally knew no bounds.

Always on the prowl. Whenever Lothar Schmid found out that someone had a book that he didn't have, he would not rest until it was his.

Lothar Schmid

On the door to the main library there is a sign: 'Please don't straighten out the mess in my room! You'll confuse me and screw up my whole world!' Perhaps Lothar Schmid himself attached it there, perhaps it was one of his family members, but in either case it's an apt warning. It takes a while to take in the long room. All along the walls are shelves filled with books, many of them beautifully bound. Display cabinets hold fine chess sets. There are runs of the most important 19th century magazines, long rows of classical works and numerous books that I have never seen before. Two shelves are filled with old editions of Vida's chess poem, which was first published in 1527.

The view is somewhat obscured by seemingly ubiquitous piles of books, half-open boxes and stacks of paper. On a round table in a corner, amid a random array of magazines and books, sits a pile of 9 copies of Gustav Selenus's *Das Schach oder Königspiel*, the first German book on chess openings published in 1616 and 1617. Why someone put them there is hard to say. On the shelves it is difficult to detect any system. Rare books often sit next to fairly insignificant modern magazines. Next to one of the finest book cases there are shelves filled with rows of the *Informant* and East German opening books that are worth virtually nothing today. Schmid's writing desk is no longer accessible. The top is filled with all kinds of everything and the chair can no longer be pushed back, as it is blocked by a row of paintings, more boxes and more books.

Lothar Schmid's favourite place was a comfortable chair at the other end of the room. Here he would sit, close to his archive of manuscripts of Tarrasch, Lasker, Bogoljubow and the likes, which he kept in a frail cardboard system with post-it stickers on the drawers, while going through the pile of books he had assembled for the occasion.

I ask Bernhard Schmid, who is giving me a tour of the house, whether this is the state the library was in when his father died. Without a trace of irony he says that they've already 'cleaned things up a bit'. This seems to be actually true. The main library is one of the tidier rooms amongst the ones I get to see initially. When we entered the house, a four-storied villa in a pleasant and quiet residential area of Bamberg, the first door he opened was to the room where Lothar Schmid kept his doubles. Originally, the room had been earmarked as Bernhard's children's room, but that never happened. He was given a room elsewhere in the house. Many of the shelves in the doubles room are empty now, after 950 duplicates were sold at the Klittich auction last November (see New In Chess 2013/8, p.10). Amongst the books that are left it is hard to detect any order. The chaos continues in the corridor outside the doubles room, where another humorous sign on top of a bookcase says in German: 'No Dumping'. Bernhard tells me that when his father put the bookcase there, he promised it would only be for a couple of weeks; four at most. That was 35 years ago. The rest of the corridor is filled with rows of paintings with chess motifs, and cupboards filled with every possible object related to chess. On top of one of the cupboards, piled up to the ceiling, are boxes with chess computers from the 1990s. Whether they have ever been unpacked is anyone's guess.

Once you have passed the threshold of his home, it only takes you a minute or 10 to realize that Lothar Schmid collected not only books, but simply anything connected to chess. One room is filled with chess sets and chess art in various forms, and everywhere you will find ashtrays, mugs, beer cans, tea services... just anything with a chess board or pieces on it. For his birthday his children would search for any kind of book to give him, as long as it had a chess picture on the cover. Then he would be invariably delighted.

Still, at the heart of the collection are the books and at the heart of this collection of, at a rough estimate, 30,000 books, are several thousand wonderful and truly significant and valuable books that will make every collector's heart beat faster. Before I am taken to the Holy Grail, a cabinet in Lothar Schmid's private office filled with the rarest books, we first visit some other

A view of the main library. In the middle a spiral staircase leads up to the attic and many more books.

Bernhard Schmid in his father's favourite chair close to his archive of manuscripts that he kept in a frail cardboard system.

COURTESY SCHMID FAMILY

For many years Lothar Schmid was one of Germany's strongest grandmasters. Here he is playing another grandmaster from Bamberg, Wolfgang Unzicker.

rooms. In fact, only the kitchen and the living room seem to have escaped the invasion of books. From the main library, a spiral staircase, half obstructed by stacks of books, leads to the attic. Here, a couple of thousand more chess books range from highly collectable works to books of little significance. There are bound volumes of English general magazines, probably because they contain chess columns or chess illustrations, and on the floor I spot five identical Harry Potter paperbacks in German ('because they contain chess'). While looking for valuable books, I remember the story of a collector who once visited Schmid's library. When they were up in the attic, the guest made a remark about the lack of order, to which Lothar Schmid, as if he had been waiting for this chance, picked a book from a pile and said: 'But isn't this a beautiful book?' It was Robert Braune's *Apôtre de la Symétrie*, the exceedingly rare number 18 of the White Christmas series from 1914 that is worth about 4,000 Euro. As I look around to see if the Braune is still around, Bernhard Schmid opens a door to stress the omnipresence of books: 'This is a small room where my mother keeps things for Christmas. As you see, this didn't prevent a bookcase from finding its way in there, too.'

While we were in the main library, I wondered about the absence of tournament books. This question is answered in one of the offices in the basement, where one wall is covered with a couple of thousand tournament and match books. The long rows start with the book on the London tournament of 1851 and end with the bulletins of the latest Olympiads.

Then, finally, the moment has come that Bernhard Schmid leads me to his father's inner sanctum, the cabinet in his private office. What strikes one immediately is that the desk in this room is clean and that the rest of the room is remarkably tidy. It's a weird thought that the 400-odd books kept here represent about 90 per cent of the value of the entire collection I have seen in the house so far. As if I am in Collectors' Heaven, Bernhard Schmid allows me to take out any book I'd like to see, just as he had done in the other rooms. They're all there. The pride of the collection, the Lucena of 1497, the oldest known chess book. All eight editions of Damiano, some editions in multiple copies. The Greco manuscript. Two first-edition Philidors. There is no end to the rarities that I can pick up and inspect. More than 100 chess books from the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries; where else would you find those together?

Although he stays around as I look at the precious books, Bernhard Schmid doesn't betray any of the nervousness that apparently plagued his father when he had guests in this room. Around lunchtime, Bernhard even leaves me alone in the main library when he briefly has to go to his office. While he is away, his sister brings me a cup of coffee and apologizes for the fact that she knows too little about the books to engage me in conversation

'On a round table in a corner, amid a random array of magazines and books, sits a pile of 9 copies of Gustav Selenus's *Das Schach oder Königspiel*.'

'In the attic, a couple of thousand more chess books range from highly collectable works to books of little significance.'

about them. I tell her not to worry. I could easily spend some weeks alone here without getting bored. She says, 'That's what many others said who came here.' I reply that she seems to stress 'others'. With a wry smile she says, 'Yes, others.'

Although he was also a chess grandmaster and arbiter, Lothar Schmid was a publisher first and foremost. At least, that is how he made his money. Together with his two brothers he inherited the Karl May publishing house from their father. In 1992 Lothar bought out his brothers' shares and became the sole owner of the house that publishes the adventures of Winnetou and Old Shatterhand, and other brainchildren of the prolific Karl May, for example Kara Ben Nemsi.

Today, Bernhard Schmid leads the Karl May Verlag. He is the only one of the three Schmid children who picked up chess and started to play it competitively. He stresses that his father never urged him to play chess, but believes that his interest in the game must have pleased him. Recently, while going through his father's rooms, he made a touching discovery. When he was 13 years old, he had presented his father with a handwritten notebook containing his 'selected games', including some of his losses. He now discovered that during all these years his father had kept it in his treasure chest, together with the Lucena and the Damiano's.

Bernhard also accompanied his father on several of his travels. His best

> The answer is simple: 'None. All books were equally important and dear to him.'

memories are connected with the Karpov-Kortchnoi World Championship match in Baguio, in the Philippines. He was 16 and it felt like a great adventure. Unfortunately he didn't go to Reykjavik, as he was too young, but he does appear in a footnote, if only anonymously, to the Match of the Century. During the Fischer-Spassky match, Lothar Schmid's greatest claim to fame as an arbiter, Bernhard had a small accident. It was nothing serious and it hardly deserved any attention, but his father used it as an excuse to briefly go home 'for family reasons'.

He also enjoys the moment when he shows me the guest book of the family and points at many photos where he sits in the company of the chess greats that were his father's friends. Botvinnik was a regular guest, and so were Petrosian, Keres, Karpov, Spassky and Fischer. Needless to say, these contacts added countless valuable trophies to the collection.

Lothar Schmid started collecting when he was 15 years old. He profited from the low prices in the post-war years and was able to buy many libraries. Bernhard was involved in an important acquisition in the mid-80s. Travelling in Poland with his father, they visited Kornik Castle near Poznan, which held the famous chess library of Tassilo von Heydebrand und der Lasa, one of the greatest figures in 19th century German chess. Lothar Schmid managed to buy a fair number of books, but couldn't take them with him, as the acquisition involved a lot of paperwork. One or two years later Bernhard and a friend, while on holiday in Poland, went to fetch the goods and returned home with a handful of boxes filled with precious chess books.

When I ask Bernhard which books were dearest to his father, he looks as if this question has never even crossed his mind. The answer is simple: 'None. They were all equally important and dear to him.'

To a certain extent that feeling seems to have stuck with his wife and children. The family wants to leave the collection intact and sell it as a whole. Perhaps the art or the chess sets will be sold separately, but even that is not clear. Several cautious suggestions from my part that the book collection would look far more glamorous and attractive if thousands of average books were weeded out are politely but firmly dismissed. It's everything or nothing at all.

Apart from the magnitude of the collection if everything has to be sold together, there is another far more

In one of the offices in the basement one wall is covered with a couple of thousand tournament and match books.

A display cabinet with fine chess sets in the main library.

COURTESY SCHMID FAMILY

Lothar Schmid and his wife with guests Yacov Estrin and Tigran Petrosian. On the right the third grandmaster from Bamberg, Helmut Pfleger.

serious complicating factor: it is not entirely clear – to put it mildly – what the prospective buyer would exactly acquire, for the simple reason that there is no catalogue. Even those who have had the chance to spend time in Schmid's library have only a vague idea of what it actually consists of. For instance, as I was looking at books in the main library, I came across signed books or books with unique dedications or in special editions, but these books were mixed in with ordinary copies and it was absolutely unclear how many of such special books he had. Likewise, you might be looking at a box of worthless books and then open a cabinet door and find an exquisite manuscript from the Rimington-Wilson library or a row of sought-after books on the chess automaton.

The only 'catalogue' that Lothar Schmid had was a copy of the 1955 catalogue of the Van der Linde-Niemeijeriana collection in the Royal Library in The Hague in which he had marked which of those books he owned himself. The countless remarks he scribbled in the margins will require an expert to make any sense of. Recently the family had a librarian draw up a simple list of the titles of the books that he kept in his inner sanctum.

This absence of a real catalogue was the most frequent complaint or caveat that I heard when, after my visit to Bamberg, I contacted a number of experts who had known Lothar Schmid well and had been in his house. I wanted to hear how they saw Lothar Schmid as a collector based on their personal experience and how they assessed his collection. The first person I called was David DeLucia, whose library I visited in 2010 (see New In Chess 2010/5) and described at the time as 'the finest chess collection in the world', a view I still subscribe to, if only because it is impossible to see the real splendour of the Schmid collection in its present state. DeLucia replied as follows to my questions: 'Lothar was a great hunter who had a lifelong passion and desire to accumulate everything he possibly could regarding the game of chess. I think his love for the hunt equaled or surpassed his love of collecting. Some years ago he said to me that if he had to do it all over again, he would have focused his interests more narrowly, but he also said that the hunt itself gave him great joy. The uniqueness of his collection rests in the depth of the book collection. Yes, he has chess sets and autographs, art and ephemera, but there are other collections that are finer in these areas. Where Lothar's collection stands apart, in my opinion, is in the number of editions he has in books from the 1500s to the present. In this category, his collection is unsurpassed.' When explaining why he believed it will be difficult to keep the collection together, DeLucia said: 'It is hard to sell a collection without a complete catalogue. Buyers want to know what they are buying for their money. Also, the size of the collection is a negative, as a lot of space, time and effort are needed to house many minor and insignificant items.' On top of that he indicated that the financial expectations of the Schmid family were too high, a topic I cannot comment on, as before my trip to Bamberg I agreed on the one condition the family had concerning my

One of several rooms filled with rows of books in disorder, boxes, piles of magazines and what not.

'Two shelves are filled with old editions of Vida's chess poem, which was first published in 1527.'

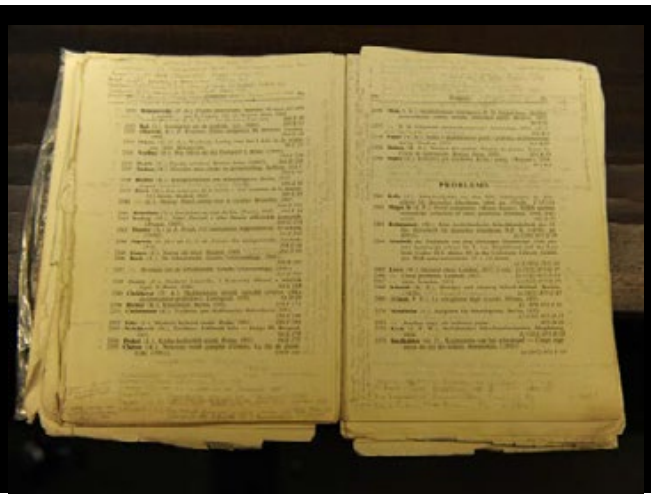
visit: that I would not speculate about the price of the collection or their financial expectations. DeLucia concluded by saying: 'Prices continue to decline with each auction; only scarce or unusual items do well. For example, a few years ago a Selenus, 1616 or 1617 edition, sold for 5,000-6,000 euros. Today, it sells for 2,000 euros! The reason is simple. All the serious collectors already own one. Unless the family decides to lower their expectations, I believe they will be forced to gradually auction off the collection. This will take years to complete, and this is assuming that no other collectors will die or decide to sell their chess items.'

The other two experts I contacted were old friends of Lothar Schmid who had once had impressive libraries themselves, but sold them long ago. Christiaan Bijl was head librarian of the Bibliotheca Van der Linde-Niemeijeriana in The Hague for 25 years (1977-2002). His own library of some 4,000 items, including countless highlights, was sold in the mid-90s through lists that he sent to other collectors. In 1985 he stayed at Schmid's house in Bamberg twice, in both cases for a fortnight. 'What I saw there exceeded all my expectations. I knew that he had a great number of extremely rare and special books, too many to name them all, but what I didn't know was that he also had thousands of doubles of mainly rare chess books, many of which I bought from him or exchanged for other books.' Bijl also mentioned Schmid's determination to get what he wanted: 'If Schmid found out that a collector had a chess book that he didn't own himself, the "little child" in him woke up and he wouldn't rest till he had the book. I once mentioned to him that I had an "interleaved" copy of Löwenthal's *Morphy's games of chess* from 1860 with many notes by the author. He made me many offers which I all declined, but during my second visit to Bamberg I gave it to him as a present. He was literally as happy as a child and gave me a number of tournament books that he knew I was looking for.' At the end of that visit Bijl asked Schmid why he didn't have a catalogue. 'Schmid's answer surprised me. He said, "That's what Von der Lasa did in 1896, and three years later he was dead." He referred to the second catalogue that Von der Lasa published. So I replied, "Von der Lasa published his first catalogue in 1887. You might limit yourself to one catalogue!" He laughed and said he'd think about it, but unfortunately it never happened.'

> 'With a few exceptions, once he had the item it lost its significance.'

Bijl believes that it is well-nigh impossible to sell the collection as a whole and still believes that his method of selling piecemeal through lists is the most profitable approach, although it takes an awful lot of time. Besides, the number of collectors isn't exactly growing and prices have dropped considerably in the past few years. As if he wanted to explain why he himself had sold his books a long time ago, he added: 'Who is ready these days to spend thousands of euros on rare 16th, 17th, 18th or 19th-century books which in fact you can only put on a shelf where they literally turn their backs on you?'

Ralf Hess, a retired German lawyer now living in Florida, also sold his books in the mid-90s. As a collector he preferred to stay out of the limelight, acting mostly incognito, but quality-wise his collection was among the finest in the world. He got to know Lothar Schmid some 40 years ago. They exchanged books and Hess was often in Schmid's library. 'I even spent time there with Bobby Fischer, listening to his views', he says with a laugh. His view of Schmid largely coincides with those of Bijl and DeLucia, but he adds his own touches. 'Lothar Schmid as a collector was obsessed. His whole life and a large part of his business life were subordinated to his passion for collecting. And if I say his life, this includes his family. This was also why, at an advanced age, he told the family that he was ready to sell the collection, but his price was 20 million euro. In other words, he didn't want to sell it at all. Because the collection was his life.



Lothar Schmid's copy of the 1955 catalogue of the Van der Linde-Niemeijeriana collection with countless notes scribbled in the margins.

One of the highlights: a beautiful handwritten manuscript by Greco.

He had this wish for completeness and wanted to be bigger than the Van der Linde-Niemeijer collection. He knew full well what was valuable and what was worthless, but he was driven by the wish to collect. He was driven by his passion for hunting. Still, with a few exceptions, once he had the item it lost its significance. He collected practically every book that had chess in it. In Amsterdam I once found a book about the women in Shakespeare and it contained one lithograph of a woman at a chess board. I showed it to him and from that moment on he wanted to have it and kept calling me for six months until I sold it to him.

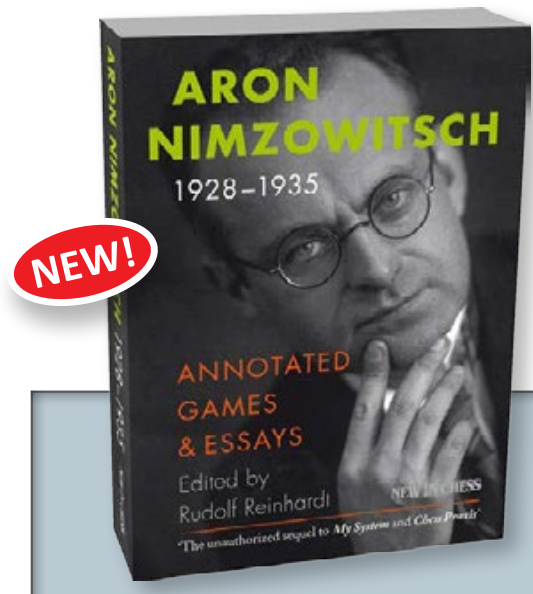
'Without a doubt this is one of the most important private chess collections ever. In the same league as Rimington-Wilson, Von der Lasa, Niemeijer, David DeLucia. He belongs in this category, but he is not necessarily the world champion. Today David DeLucia's collection, when we are talking about quality, is definitely not less than his. It's hard to say which collection is more important. These are admirable acquisitions made through the decades. This wonderful collection of Lothar Schmid's consists of about 5,000 books. The rest is financially uninteresting; they are worth 10 or 5 euro, or 7.50.'

His advice to the family is to find someone knowledgeable who will try to sell these 5,000 books – and describe them, so that the buyer will know what he is buying. 'This was his reputation. When you were buying something special from him, you always had to make sure that you really got what you thought it was. Perhaps this was part of his bibliomania, but there might be things missing. If there are imperfections in the important books, the buyer should be aware of this. This should be painstakingly described.'

Hess understands that the Schmid family is dreaming of selling everything together, but he doesn't see a private collector who will take this jump into the dark. 'In the end it will be auctioned anyway. I don't see a library buying it either. They have even more responsibilities. They cannot buy a mountain of books for a big sum and then start praying they have bought something of value.'

On several occasions, Lothar Schmid made the same joke when referring to his wife's worries that the ceiling of their bedroom, which was situated under the main library, might cave in. Laughing heartily he would say, 'Lothar Schmid killed by books, what a beautiful death.' That's not how it went. Today it's his wife and children who are weighed down by the immense size and mysteriousness of what he accumulated in his collecting life. Perhaps they will find that one person or that one institute that will fall for everything he has amassed. Or maybe they will finally listen to his fellow-collectors, who believe that the Schmid collection will only shine once it is freed of the excess weight that pulls it down and conceals its splendour. ■

The cabinet with the Lucena and the Damiano's in Lothar Schmid's inner sanctum. 'It's a weird thought that the 400-odd books kept here represent about 90 per cent of the value of the entire collection I have seen in the house so far.'



ChessCafe Book of the Year Finalist!

"If Nimzowitsch had published an additional third part of his two-volume 'System' series, he would definitely have used a large part of the material that is collected in this book."
Peter Anderberg, Schach Magazine

"A great collection. It is well worth your time, and you will likely find this more entertaining and instructive than many modern-day publications."
Michael McGuerty, ChessCafe

"A must for every fan of the great teacher of the Hypermodern."
KARL Magazine

"I like this book a lot. It is a hefty tome full of material that we can learn from, also in 2014."
Richard Vedder, Schakers.info

"The book convinces throughout. Reinhardt's work will be of vital importance for all future study of Nimzowitsch's life and career."
Rochade Europa Magazine

♦

paperback ♦ 416 pages ♦ €34.95
available at your local (chess)bookseller
or at www.newinchess.com

In the first game of the final Hikaru Nakamura successfully changed tack. Instead of offbeat openings and positional play he launched a razor-sharp attack that Boris Gelfand failed to withstand.

The trickiest player on the planet strikes in London

The rate of play was faster, the games were more light-hearted, but otherwise the London Chess Classic was as classy an event as we had come to know England's finest in the past four editions. The extensive commentator team entertained the audience with humour and wit, while a wide array of guests was being entertained in the convivial atmosphere of the VIP-room. One of the regular forces in the VIP-room was our reporter **Jonathan Speelman**. The English grandmaster closely followed the action from the first to the last move and saw Hikaru Nakamura, 'the trickiest player on the planet', emerge victorious. 'He played really well throughout with only the odd blip and is a very worthy winner.'

When it became clear that Magnus Carlsen would be challenging Viswanathan Anand for his title just weeks before their annual slot, the organisers of the London Classic faced a dilemma.

Carlsen had played every year since the tournament's inception – and won every time except for the third edition in 2011 when Vladimir Kramnik took the plaudits; while Anand had graced the event from the second edition onwards. It was clear that without one or both of them this would be a different and somewhat lesser event and the solution they came up with was a change of format, shifting from the gravitas of classical chess to the hurly burly of rapidplay.

Over the months from the end of the London Candidates' onwards, thirteen players accepted invitations and when it became certain that the new World Champion would not be attending, his place (officially a 'wildcard') was offered to the Scottish number one and three times British Champion Jonathan Rowson, who joined the top six English players and seven top foreigners.

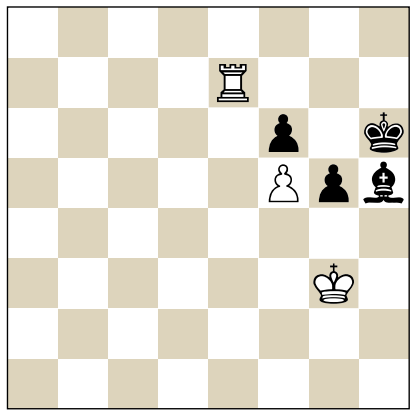
Two further places remained and I believe that various ideas were mooted before it was decided that the top two in the Open tournament would transfer after four rounds to the main event, the 'Super Sixteen Rapidplay' itself. The two who qualified, Andrei Istratescu and Emil Sutovsky, are, of course, both very strong grandmasters. But the change of mindset from slaughtering weaker opponents at a classical time limit (both had begun the Open with 4/4) to battling for their lives at rapidplay against the world's best proved excessively challenging; and both lost all four games on the first two days before finally finding form on the third.

But I'm getting ahead of myself and we return to Wednesday December 11th when, halfway through the festival, the stage was set at Kensington Olympia in the centre of London for the commencement of hostilities.

Olympia is a huge venue and the chess occupies a whole floor. There is the main auditorium where the games are played, a separate hall for the Open tournament, the International Women's tournament and various other groups; a foyer where people can chat or play friendly games, and where simultaneous displays and blitz events were held; a commentary room and a VIP room.

The latter is a great place to chat, nibble and/or sup, perhaps play blitz (noisily in some cases); and above all barrack the commentary – which as in previous years was mainly conducted by Julian Hodgson. And that is where I've always gravitated, though as in previous years my official function and also that of fellow barracker John Nunn was as a member of the Appeals Committee (which still hasn't ever actually had anything to arbitrate upon – long may this continue).

The barrackers and the chief commentator also gave simuls this time too – Julian and I both had about a dozen opponents, but John on the Friday night twice as many. And I'll start with something small but pleasing from my simul:



Speelman-NN
London simul 2013

I thought that I'd tricked my opponent – a schoolboy whose name I didn't discover, but he played **1...♗g4!** White could play on with 2.♖f7, but I was impressed and took a draw with **2.♔xg4** Luke McShane hadn't noticed ...♗g4 either.

There was a time years ago when a knockout tournament meant just that. But the current norm, not just in chess but in football too, is for preliminary groups and then a knockout finale and that is what they had, with four groups of four from which the top two progressed to the quarter-finals.

The stage (the same one that had been used for the previous Classical chess tournaments) is large but not excessively so, with comfortable room for four games. So two of the four preliminary groups were able to play at a time.

The action kicked off on Wednesday afternoon with a bloodthirsty round in which all four games ended decisively and there were serious changes of fortune in all, except Istratescu against Adams, which was a pretty clean win for the English number one. Luke McShane's game with Viswanathan Anand was particularly dra(and trau)-matic.

Rapidplay is different from Classical chess and even these very top guys find it difficult to play accurately, certainly when faced with their peers. Indeed, not only were the software – and at good moments the human commentators too – able to

discern many hidden inaccuracies: but there were also a surprisingly large number of really hefty blunders all too visible to the naked eye.

Partly out of laziness, but also out of respect, I'm therefore not going to try to dissect the games too punctiliously and will mainly tend to skip to the critical moments. There really isn't any virtue in pointing out that some piece of software has been harrumphing at the inferior carbon-based decision-making.

DAVID LLADA

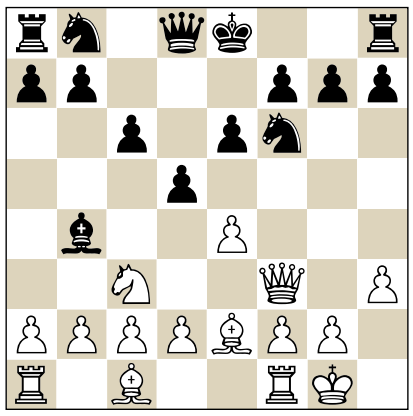
Harvard professor and former chess pro Ken Rogoff is a regular guest at the Classic. So is Vishy Anand. The former World Champion started well but was knocked out in a sensational game by Vladimir Kramnik.

CK 1.9 – B11
Luke McShane
Vishy Anand
London 2 (Group A round 1)

1.e4 c6 2.♘f3 d5 3.♘c3 ♗g4 4.h3 ♗xf3

I guess that the Caro was a slight surprise to Luke so he chose a fairly quiet line. On Anand's part there seems no reason to get involved in a heavy theoretical discussion after 4...♗h5 5.exd5 cxd5 6.♗b5+ ♘c6 7.g4, especially at rapidplay.

5.♕xf3 e6 6.♗e2 ♘f6 7.0-0 ♗b4

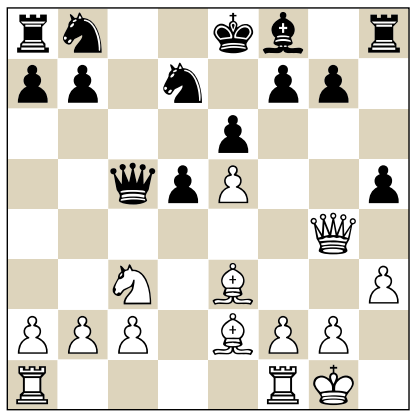


8.e5 It's hard not to be provoked but software can be wonderful and Houdini immediately popped up with 8.♖b1!?, which certainly wasn't my first thought.

8...♘fd7 9.♕g4 ♗f8 10.d4 c5

Black is very happy to play this break when White has a bishop on e2 rather than a knight on f3 defending the centre, but of course he's lost time both with his bishop and with ...c7-c6-c5, so unsurprisingly White gets tactical play.

11.♗g5 ♕b6 12.dxc5 ♕xc5 13.♗e3 h5?!

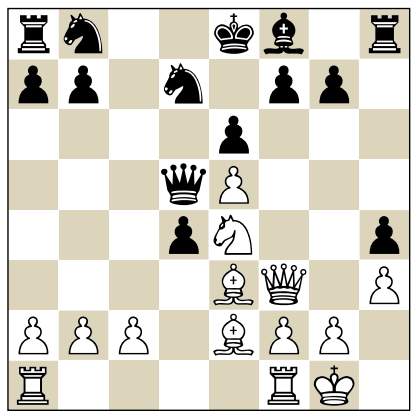


14.♕g3 14.♕xh5! was strong because after 14...♖xh5 15.♗xc5 ♖xe5 (15...♖h8 16.♗xf8 ♔xf8 17.f4 is very unconvincing) 16.♗xf8 ♔xf8 17.f4 ♖e3 18.♔f2 White wins material. In a rapidplay game you'd probably try 18...♖xc3 rather than 18...d4 19.♖ad1 ♘c6 20.♗f3 when 20...♖xf3+ is the best chance anyway. Anand would have had chances in practice at least and 15...♗xc5 (instead of 15...♖xe5) 16.♗xh5 ♘xe5 was another reasonable way to ditch the exchange.

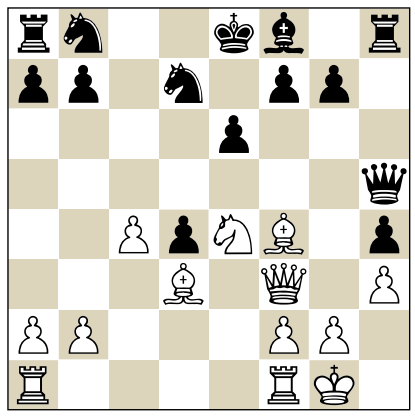
14...d4 15.♘e4 h4 16.♕f3

16.♕f4 ♕xe5 17.♕xe5 ♘xe5 18.♗xd4 gives White some sort of edge but this is much more difficult for Black.

16...♕d5?!



16...♕b6 was better, when 17.♗f4 ♘c6 18.♘d6+ ♗xd6 19.exd6 looks pretty unclear. **17.c4! ♕xe5** Unsurprisingly, 17...dxc3 18.♖ad1 would have been pretty suicidal. **18.♗f4 ♕f5 19.♗d3 ♕h5**

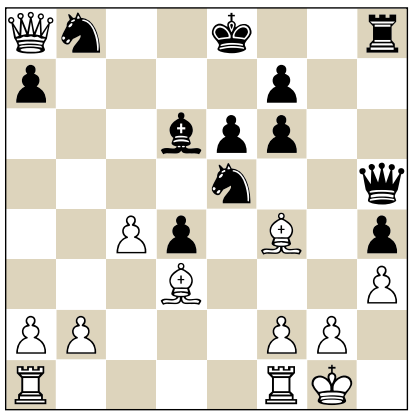


20.♘f6+! gxf6 21.♕xb7 ♘e5?!

21...e5 is really ugly – after you've set up the centre pawn on e6 you generally don't want to advance it and cer-

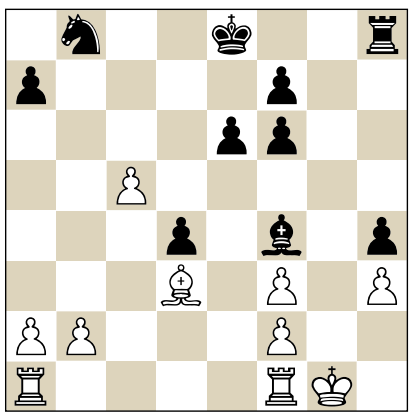
tainly not here. Indeed, after simply 22.♕xa8 exf4 23.♖fe1+ ♔d8 24.♖e4 Black is extremely loose. But in theory he would have had better chances than after 21... ♘e5, since now 22.♕c8+! ♔e7 23.♗e4 leaves Black almost totally dead.

22.♕xa8?! ♗d6



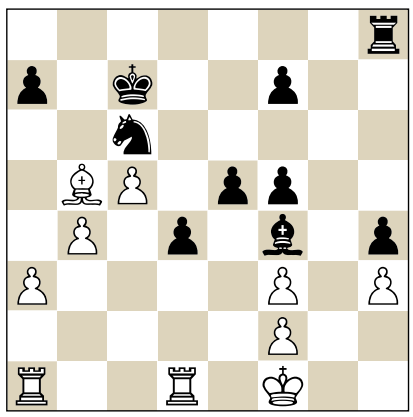
23.c5? In the VIP room, Nigel Short pointed out that a 'talented Russian amateur behind him' had suggested 23.♔h1!. Indeed, Mr G. Kasparov's move was much better.

23...♘f3+ 24.♕xf3 ♕xf3 25.gxf3 ♗xf4



I suppose that White is more or less winning in theory, but it's not hard for Black to play now, so in practice Luke had already blown a huge part of his advantage.

26.b4 ♘c6 27.♗b5 ♔d7 28.♖fd1 e5 29.a3 f5 30.♔f1 ♔c7

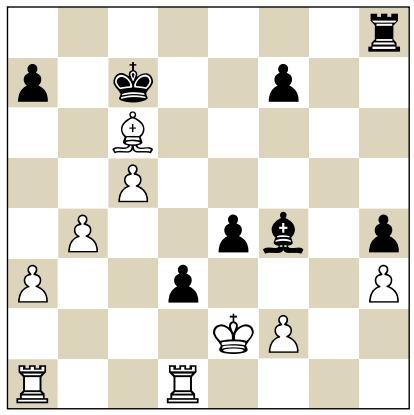


31.♔e2??

> 'In the VIP room, Nigel Short pointed out that a "talented Russian amateur behind him" had suggested 23.♔h1!.'

After 31.♗d3 ♘e7 32.♗c4 White retains the advantage. Now, however, the black pawns are able to roll and White is in deep trouble.

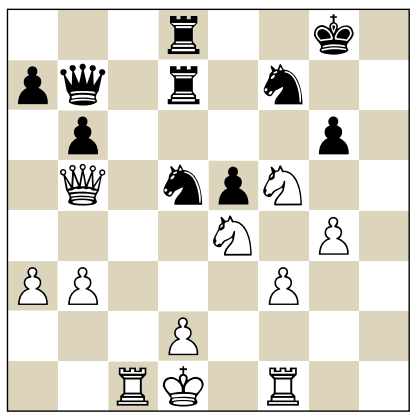
31...e4! 32.fxe4 fxe4 33.♗xc6 d3+



34.♔f1 Unfortunately, White can't bail out with 34.♖xd3 because 34... exd3+ 35.♔f3 ♗e5 36.♖e1 d2 wins a piece. The pawns are now unstoppable, certainly at rapidplay.

34...♔xc6 35.♔g2 ♔d5 36.♖g1 ♗e5 37.♖ad1 ♖g8+ 38.♔f1 ♖xg1+ 39.♔xg1 f5 40.♔g2 ♔d4 41.c6 f4 42.b5 ♗c7 43.♖b1 d2 44.♔f1 ♔d3 45.a4 e3 46.fxe3 fxe3 White resigned.

There was slightly less bloodshed in the second session on Wednesday afternoon, but still some very interesting moments.



Short-Howell
Group D round 1
position after 31... hxg6

Susan Polgar Chess Daily News

Everything you need within your fingertips

Bringing you updated, timely, fair, and objective chess daily news and information from around the globe

News * Puzzles * Improvement Tips * Analysis * Videos * Trivia * and much more

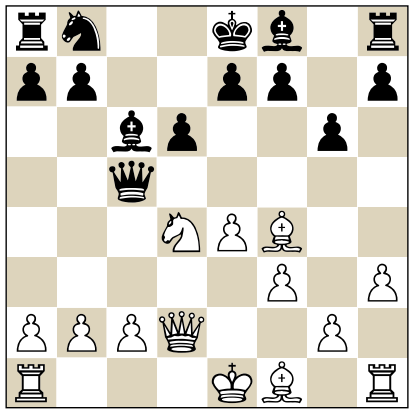
www.ChessDailyNews.com

Short played **32.♘h4** and they did eventually draw. Had he wanted to force this immediately then he could have done so with 32.♕xd5 and after either recapture 33.♘f6+ with a very unusual perpetual.

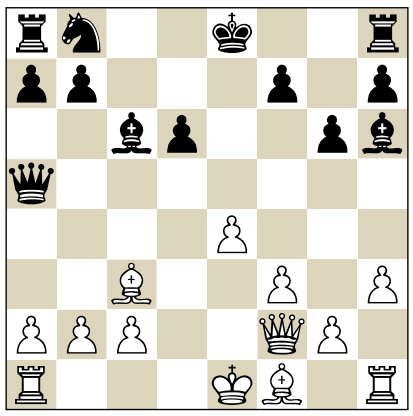
I've already noted how difficult the transition was for the two qualifiers Sutovsky and Istratescu. Sutovsky's first game looked ghastly at first sight but there was a lot more point to his play than was immediately apparent.

QP 6.8 – A48
Fabiano Caruana
Emil Sutovsky
London 2013 (D 1)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.♗f4 d6 4.h3 c5 5.dxc5 ♕a5+ 6.♕d2 ♕xc5 7.♘c3 ♗f5 8.♘d4 ♘e4 9.♘xe4 ♗xe4 10.f3 ♗c6 11.e4

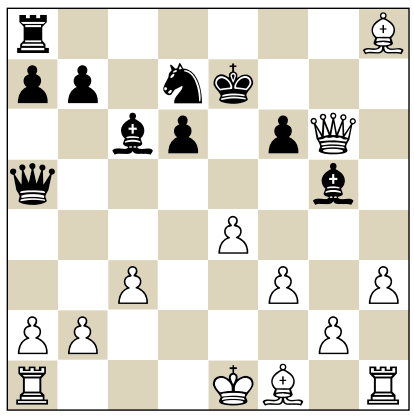


11...e5?!
A move which your hand might itch to play in an open tournament but not such a good idea against Caruana.
12.♗e3 exd4 13.♗xd4 ♗h6 14.♕f2 ♕a5+ 15.♗c3



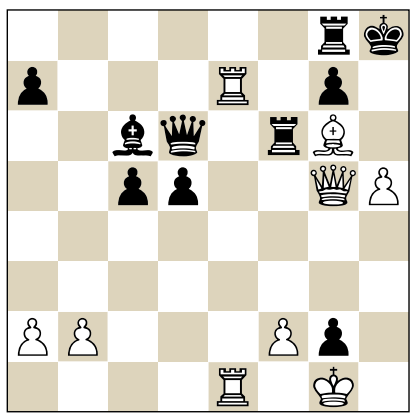
15...♕d8?

In the VIP room I wondered aloud – though without any conviction – whether he intended 15...♕xc3+ (a move for blitz or more likely bullet chess but not rapidplay). But after 15...♕g5 16.h4 (if 16.♗xh8 f6 17.f4 ♕a5+ 18.c3 ♘d7 19.♕h4 ♕b6!) 16...♕e7 17.♗xh8 f6 18.h5 g5 19.♕d4 ♘d7 Black has real chances.
16.♗xh8 f6 17.♕h4 ♗g5 18.♕xh7 ♕a5+ 19.c3 ♘d7 20.♕xg6+ ♔e7



21.h4!
In fact Sutovsky had seen up to here when playing 15...♕d8? and convinced himself that he was okay, missing 21.h4 which is a total knockout.
21...♗e3 22.♗xf6+ ♘xf6 23.♕g7+ ♔e6 24.g3! ♗f2+ 25.♔d2! ♗e3+ 26.♔c2 ♗xe4+ 27.fxe4 ♕a4+ 28.b3 ♕xe4+ 29.♔b2 ♕f3 30.♗h3+ Black resigned.

McShane bounced back from the loss to Anand, finishing the day with a flourish:



McShane-Istratescu
Group A round 2
position after 30... ♗c6.

31.♕h6+!

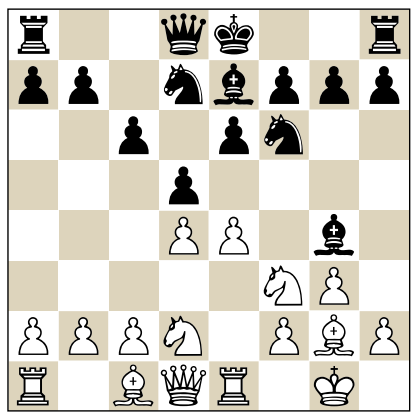
Three players finished the first day on 2/2: Kramnik (in group B), Boris Gelfand (C) and Fabiano Caruana (D), though all dropped at at least a draw on the Thursday.

Even if the quality wasn't always enormously high, there were a huge number of interesting games over the five days and I'm going to look properly at just four more and scoot through a few critical diagrams as well.

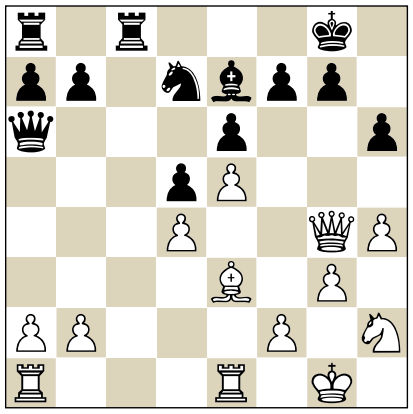
One of the most interesting of all was the return game Vishy Anand versus Luke McShane on the Thursday afternoon.

RE 22.12 – A07
Vishy Anand
Luke McShane
London 2013 (A 4)

1.♘f3 d5 2.g3 c6 3.♗g2 ♗g4 4.0-0 ♘d7 5.d4 e6 6.♘bd2 ♘gf6 7.♖e1 ♗e7 8.e4
Years ago, I used to make my living with this Réti/Queen's Pawn hybrid, but like a distressing number of other openings that I've played, I certainly wouldn't bet my house on its efficacy in theory. It really isn't so bad to capture on e4, and allowing e5 with the bishop outside the pawn chain defending the king. It is a bit more macho and very reasonable too.



8...0-0 9.h3 ♗h5 10.c3 ♗g6 11.e5 ♘e4 12.♘xe4 ♗xe4 13.♘h2 ♗g6 14.h4 h6 15.♗f1 c5 16.♗d3 ♗xd3 17.♕xd3 cxd4 18.cxd4 ♕a5 19.♗e3 ♖fc8 20.♕e2 ♕a6 21.♕g4



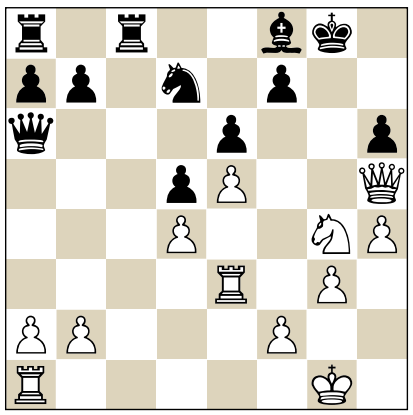
Of course both players could have done it differently on the way but this is the first critical moment. After 21...♔f8! it would have been really difficult to justify White's play, since he's clearly worse on the queenside and a kingside attack is problematical at best. If Black gets in ...♕d3 then the attack looks stone dead. 22.♖ed1 ♖c2 prepares ...♕e2, perhaps preceded by ...♖ac8, while 22.♖ad1 ♕xa2 is pure gambling, and if 22.♕d1 ♖c6 23.♕b1 simply 23...♔g8. So perhaps White should bail out with 22.♕e2, but after 22...♕xe2 23.♖xe2 and maybe now 23...h5 Black is very comfortable.

21...♔h8?

Extremely encouraging for White. Anand now didn't hesitate.

22.♕h5 ♔g8 23.♗xh6! gxh6 24.♘g4 ♗f8 25.♖e3

In practice this is almost indefensible for Black, certainly at rapidplay.



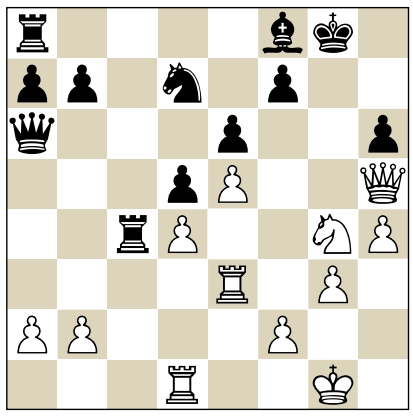
25...♖c4!

The best chance. If 25...♖c2 then 26.♖f3 ♕e2 27.♖xf7 ♕xg4 28.♖xf8+! is winning.

26.♖d1

NEW IN CHESS

Jon Speelman and Luke McShane have a look at the latter's wild game against Vishy Anand. Judit Polgar briefly interrupts her game against soccer star Edgar Davids to listen to their findings.



Machines like 26.♖f3 ♖xd4 27.♘xh6+ ♗xh6 28.♕xf7+ ♔h8 29.♕h5 ♖g4! 30.♖a3 ♕b6 31.♖b3 ♕a6 32.♕xg4, but this is much more human.

26...♕b6?

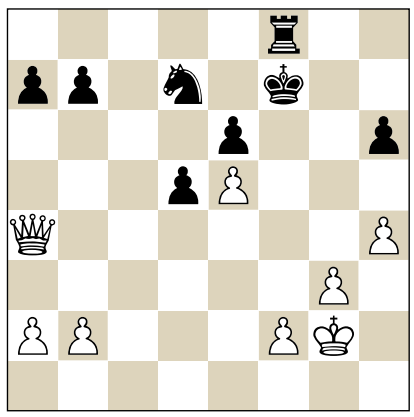
A mistake but you wouldn't expect to be able to defend this without a very long time to think or a lucky choice. Later I looked at this with Luke in the VIP room and we didn't find the defence – though the entirely necessary alcohol may not have helped.

He wanted to play 26...♖ac8 but after 27.♖f3 ♖c1 28.♖xf7 ♖xd1+ 29.♔h2 ♕d3 30.♖xd7 ♔h8 31.♘xh6 ♖h1+ 32.♔xh1 ♕f1+ 33.♔h2 ♕xf2+ 34.♔h3 ♕f1+ 35.♔g4 ♕d1+ 36.♔g5 ♕d2+ (36...♕xh5+ 37.♔xh5 is easy for White of course) 37.♔g6 ♕d3+ 38.♘f5+ the countercheck finishes matters.

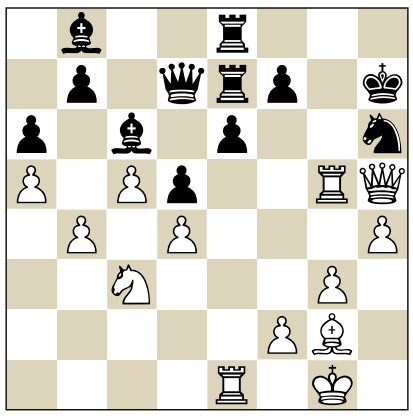
It was far from obvious that with the rook on d1 Black should now play 26...♖c2!, since it will be loose with check.

27.♖f3 ♕e2 28.♕xf7+ (28.♖f1 ♕xf3 29.♘xh6+ ♗xh6 30.♕xf3 is very playable for Black) 28...♔h8 29.♖f1 ♗g7 30.♘xh6 ♖f8 (not 30...♗xh6? 31.♕h5 ♕d2 32.♖f4! ♘f8 33.♕xh6+ ♘h7 34.♕xe6) 31.♕h5 ♖xf3 32.♘f5+ ♔g8 33.♘e7+ ♔f8 34.♘g6+ ♔g8 and it's a draw.

27.♖f3 ♖xd4 28.♖xd4 ♕xd4 29.♖xf7 ♕d1+ 30.♔g2 ♕xg4 31.♖xf8+! ♖xf8 32.♕xg4+ ♔f7 33.♕a4



White is winning easily and after **33...♖d8 34.h5 ♘f8 35.♕f4+ ♔e8 36.♕xh6 d4 37.♔f1 ♖d5 38.♕f6** Black resigned.



Sadler-Rowson
Group B round 4
position after 37.♖g5

This was played in the same session as Anand v McShane. I've mentioned that there were some hefty blunders and what occurred from this diagram

London 2013 Group A				cat. XIX
1 Michael Adams	IGM	ENG	2754	12
2 Vishy Anand	IGM	IND	2773	12
3 Luke McShane	IGM	ENG	2684	4
4 Andrei Istratescu	IGM	FRA	2670	4
3 points for a win, 1 for a draw				

London 2013 Group B				cat. XVIII
1 Peter Svidler	IGM	RUS	2758	11
2 Vladimir Kramnik	IGM	RUS	2793	9
3 Matthew Sadler	IGM	ENG	2646	7
4 Jonathan Rowson	IGM	SCO	2569	4

London 2013 Group C				cat. XX
1 Hikaru Nakamura	IGM	USA	2786	10
2 Boris Gelfand	IGM	ISR	2777	9
3 Gawain Jones	IGM	ENG	2654	7
4 Judit Polgar	IGM	HUN	2693	5

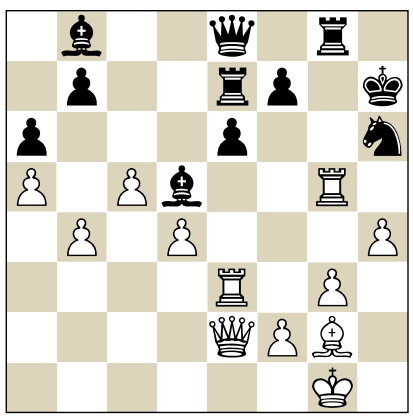
London 2013 Group D				cat. XVIII
1 Fabiano Caruana	IGM	ITA	2782	16
2 Nigel Short	IGM	ENG	2683	10
3 David Howell	IGM	ENG	2640	5
4 Emil Sutovsky	IGM	ISR	2657	3

was pretty terrible. But the human nervous system can only take so much before things go awry and since I try not to see chess as a blood sport I'm showing it here really only to support the argument that it would be better if, with Magnus Carlsen presumably available, they went back to classical chess next time.

37...♖h8?

37...♖f8! was the only defence because now 38.♗f1! ♕e8 39.♗d3+ f5 40.♗xf5+! exf5 41.♖xe7+ ♕xe7 42.♕g6+ is mate.

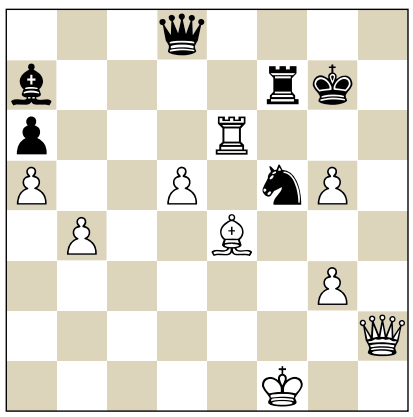
38.♖e3 ♕e8 39.♕e2 ♖g8 40.♘xd5 ♗xd5



41.♖xd5?

41.♗xd5 was much better.

41...f5 42.c6 bxc6 43.♖c5 f4 44.♗e4+ ♔g7 45.♖g5+ ♔f8 46.♖c3 fxg3 47.fxg3 ♖xg5 48.hxg5 ♘f5 49.♖xc6 ♔g7 50.♕h2 ♕d8 51.d5 ♗a7+ 52.♔f1 ♖f7 53.♖xe6



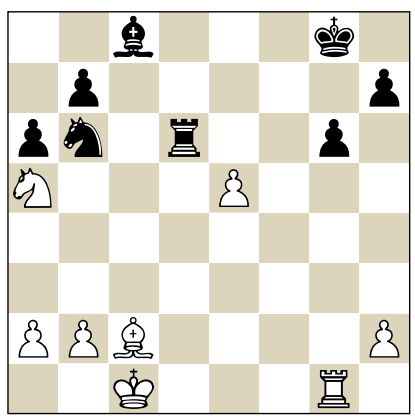
53...♘d4+? In the total panic of the scramble Rowson missed that after 53...♘xg3+ 54.♔e1 he had 54...♖f1+!, winning on the spot.

54.♔g2 ♘xe6 55.♕h6+ ♔g8 56.dxe6 ♖g7 57.e7 ♕xe7? 58.♗d5+ ♔f8 59.♕h8+

Black resigned.

By the final round of the preliminaries on the Friday evening almost everything had already been decided, though had Matthew Sadler beaten Peter Svidler, then he might have gone straight through with Svidler – if Kramnik were to lose to Rowson; or had a play-off with Kramnik if he and Rowson drew.

In the event, Sadler could only draw though he did miss a big hit on the way:



Sadler-Svidler
Group B round 6
position after 29. e5

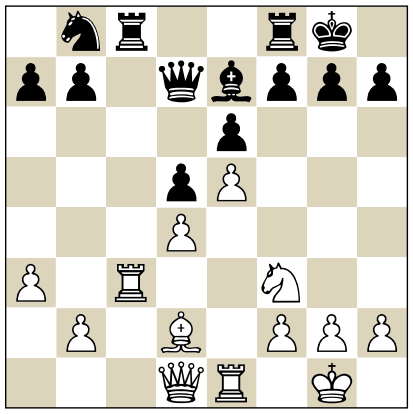
There had been a quite complicated melee to reach this position, and now **29...♖d4** looked obvious. White was concerned to support his e-pawn and played **30.♗b3+ ♔g7 31.♖e1** after which they drew fairly quickly.

If you're given the diagram and asked why 29...♖d4 is a blunder, then 30.♗xg6! is obvious, but I must say it wasn't instantly to us in the VIP room. It would have given good winning chances after 30...♔f8 31.♗xh7, though Black can still fight.
Instead, 29...♖d7! was correct, since 30.♗xg6? then fails to 30...♖g7!.

Like the two qualifiers, Gawain Jones couldn't get going until the final day but he then beat Judit Polgar, and Gelfand in this nice game.

SI 1.10 – B52
Gawain Jones
Boris Gelfand
London 2013 (C 6)

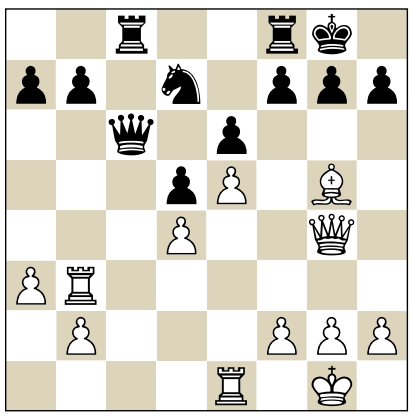
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♗b5+ ♗d7 4.♗xd7+ ♕xd7 5.0-0 ♘c6 6.c3 ♘f6 7.♖e1 e6 8.d4 cxd4 9.cxd4 d5 10.e5 ♘e4 11.♘bd2 ♘xd2 12.♗xd2 ♗e7 13.♖c1 0-0 14.♖c3 ♖ac8 15.a3 ♘b8



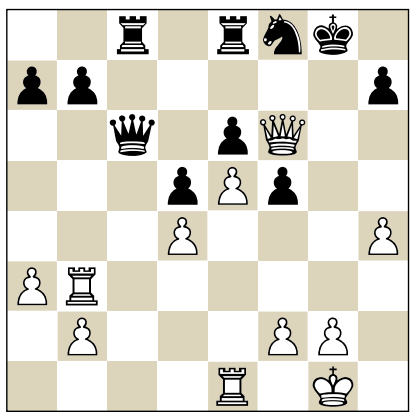
NEW IN CHESS

The commentary in the VIP-room was entertaining and funny as ever. Before he leaves for his hotel, Vladimir Kramnik adds a serious note that sets Julian Hodgson and Gawain Jones thinking.

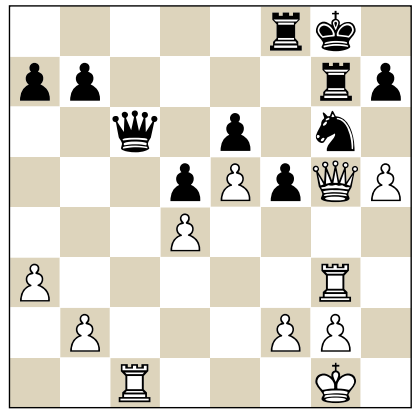
16.♖d3!
This is an excellent idea to keep the rook ready to attack.
16...♕b5
You won't be amazed to hear that my software, unburdened by fear and possibly blinkered by its horizon, isn't hugely impressed. Houdini suggests simply 16...♘c6 17.♘g5 ♗xg5 18.♗xg5 ♘e7 19.♕h5 ♘g6 20.♖h3 h6 21.♗xh6 gxh6 22.♕xh6 ♖fd8 and it does seem at first sight to be a draw, though White certainly isn't risking anything.
17.♖b3 ♕c6 18.♘g5 ♗xg5 19.♗xg5 ♘d7 20.♕g4



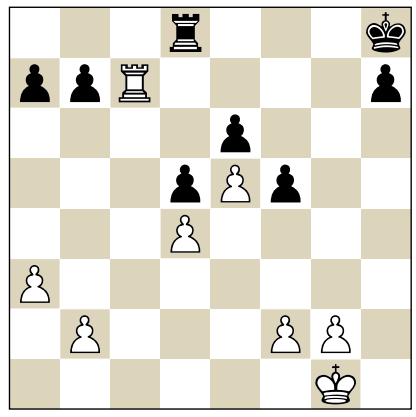
20...f5
Offering a pawn to bail out. Indeed if 21.exf6 ♘xf6 22.♕xe6+ ♕xe6 23.♖xe6 h6 24.♗e3 ♖f7 Black has reasonable play and Gawain decided that it was better to go for mate.
21.♕h4 ♖fe8 22.♗f6 ♘f8 23.♗xg7 ♔xg7 24.♕f6+ ♔g8 25.h4! The critical position and not at all easy to defend.



25...♖c7?!
It's very far from obvious but 25...f4 was best. After 26.♕xf4 ♖e7 27.♖g3+ ♖g7 28.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 29.♕f6+ ♔g8 30.♖e3 (if 30.h5? ♕c2 gets chances) 30...♘g6 White can still easily bail out with 31.♖g3 ♖f8 32.♖xg6+, but if he persists then after something like 31.h5 ♖f8 32.♕g5 ♖f5 33.♕h6 ♕c2 34.♔h2 ♖xf2 35.♖g3 ♕d2 Black is at least equal.
26.♖g3+ ♘g6 27.h5 ♖f8 28.♕g5 ♖g7 29.♖c1



29...♕b6?
White now gets a big advantage. 29...♕d7 30.hxg6 ♖xg6 31.♕f4 ♖xg3 32.♕xg3+ ♕g7 isn't pleasant but still looks playable(ish).
30.hxg6 ♖xg6 31.♕h4 ♖xg3 32.♕xg3+ ♔h8 33.♕h4 ♕d8 34.♕xd8 ♖xd8 35.♖c7
And White soon won.



35...♖g8 36.♖xb7 ♖g4 37.♖xa7 ♖xd4 38.b4 ♖d1+ 39.♔h2 d4 40.b5 d3 41.♖d7 d2 42.a4 ♔g8 43.a5 ♖b1 44.b6 d1♕ 45.♖xd1 ♖xd1 46.b7 Black resigned.

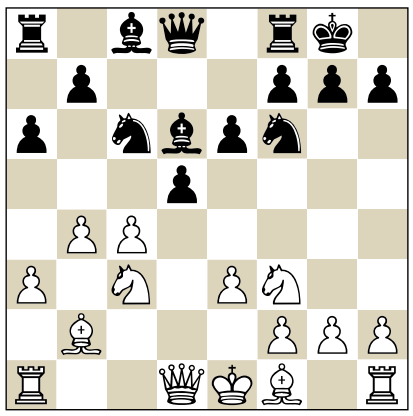
Despite all the thrills and spills the favourites had all finally progressed from the preliminary groups and the quarter-finals featured Nakamura v Short, Kramnik v Anand, Gelfand v Caruana and Adams v Svidler.

The latter two of these both went to blitz, with Gelfand winning after he tricked Caruana and Adams winning fairly comfortably against Svidler (after a very tough pair of rapidplay games).

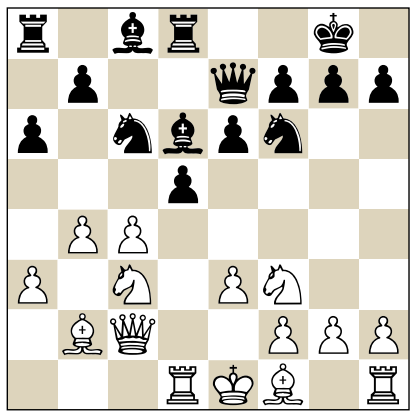
Nakamura meanwhile had defeated Short after tricking him in the first game and holding the second, while Kramnik went through after this shockingly quick win:

TD 1.15 – D40
Vishy Anand
Vladimir Kramnik
London 2013 (quarter final 2)

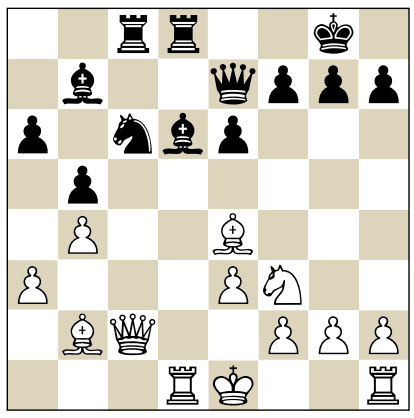
1.♘f3 d5 2.c4 e6 3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘c3 c5 5.e3 ♘c6 6.a3 a6 7.dxc5 ♗xc5 8.b4 ♗d6 9.♗b2 0-0



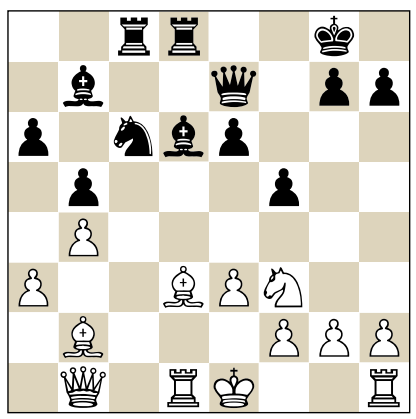
10.♕c2
All of this has been played hundreds if not thousands of times before, of course. This way White keeps the tension for the moment.
Instead, 10.cxd5 exd5 11.♗e2 is just an IQP position. White is Black and the extra tempo isn't that wonderful.
10...♕e7 11.♖d1 ♖d8



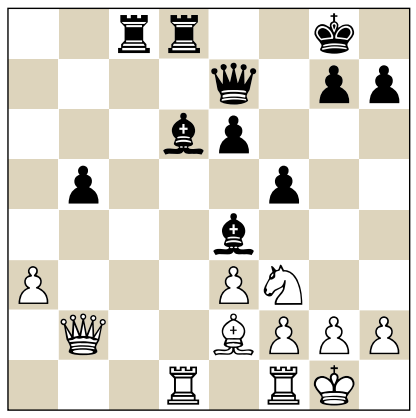
12.♗e2
Perhaps it now was time to play 12.cxd5 exd5 13.♗e2, since without the exchange the bishop move loses a tempo. It would be nice to waive a piece at Black's kingside with 13.♘g5 – which is also possible immediately after 10...♕e7 – but the tactics don't work for White.
(If 11.cxd5 exd5 12.♘g5 g6, while on this move if 12.cxd5 exd5 13.♘g5 either 13...g6 or 13...♗e5.)
12...dxc4 13.♗xc4 b5 14.♗d3 ♗b7 15.♘e4
If 15.0-0 ♖ac8 16.♕b1 ♘e5 17.♘xe5 ♗xe5 Black is at least equal, so Anand got in ♘e4 himself first, but since he hadn't yet castled the tactics weren't very favourable for him.
15...♘xe4 16.♗xe4 ♖ac8



17.♕b1?
This looks harmless enough but now Black is able to seize the initiative. Having started the process it seems Anand should have continued with 17.♗xh7+ ♔h8 18.♕b1. Kramnik then intended 18...♘xb4 19.axb4 ♗xb4+ 20.♔e2 f5 and this looks really scary since if 21.♗g6 then 21...♗e4 is disastrous, but White can counter-sacrifice with 21.♗xf5! exf5 22.♕xf5. In a game you'd have to think carefully to decide whether White was remotely alright here but in fact after 22...♗e4 23.♖xd8+ ♖xd8 24.♕h3+ ♔g8 25.♖d1 he seems to survive okay, or at least that's what Houdini tells me.
17...f5! 18.♗d3

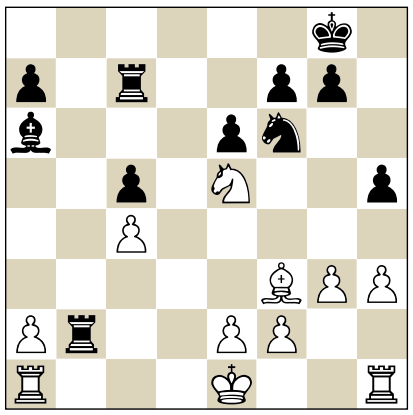


18...a5! Kramnik of course knew that he had rather more than equalised by this point but I think that he no less than his opponent and everybody else was surprised at how quickly he turned out to have a huge advantage.
19.bxa5 ♘xa5 20.0-0 ♘c4 21.♗e2?
Losing. 21.♗a1 was grim but at least White could try to fight on.
21...♗e4 22.♕a1 ♘xb2 23.♕xb2



23...b4! Short-circuiting the intended defence of 23...♖c2 24.♕xb5. 24.♖xd6 ♕xd6 25.♕xb4 ♕xb4 26.axb4 ♖c2 27.♗a6 ♗xf3 28.gxf3 ♖dd2 29.b5 ♖b2 would now be utterly dead and so Anand tried to fight his way out tactically, but after **24.axb4 ♖c2 25.♕b3 ♖xe2 26.♘d4 ♗d5 27.♕d3 ♕h4** it will soon be mate and he resigned.

Shattering though this was, the drama in the semi-finals was even greater.

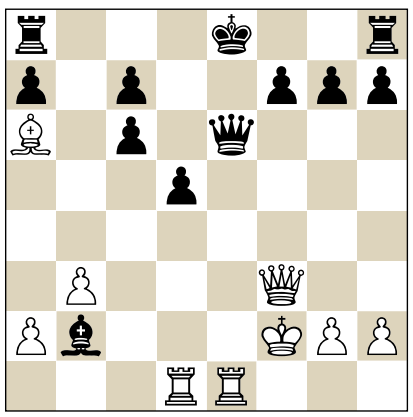


Gelfand-Adams KO 2.1
position after 24. ♘e5

Adams had outplayed Gelfand somewhat in the opening but the edge had dissipated by now because his intended continuation was a mistake. **24...♘d7?** It looks as though Black will win a pawn but after **25.0-0-0!** White wins material. Adams got reasonable chances with **25...♘xe5 26.♔xb2 ♘xf3 27.exf3 ♗xc4** but Gelfand just managed to win in the end.

As Nigel Short pointed out at the time, 25.0-0-0 is an instance of 'Startling Castling' as in the book of that name by Robert Timmer. When writing about this game elsewhere I hastened to order a copy on the internet and it is great fun. Though I was surprised to realise later that I definitely already have a copy on my shelves since I reviewed it in *The Observer* when the English edition came out!

This is a pretty flawed but nice instance from the book:



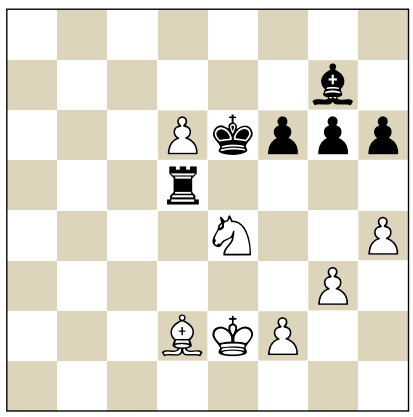
Bakhmatov-Malevinsky
Alushta 1976
position after 21.♖he1

NEW IN CHESS

After the tournament has ended for him, Vishy Anand relaxes in the VIP-room talking to Daniel King, David Norwood and Nigel Short.

21...0-0!! 22.♗b7 ♖ab8 23.♖xe6 fxe6 24.♗xc6 ♖b6 25.♗a4 c5 26.♔e2 ♖xf3 27.gxf3 ♔f7 28.♔d3 ♖b4 29.♖e1 ♔e7 30.♗c6 ♔d6 31.♗e8 ♖f4 32.♗h5 ♗e5
White resigned.

Anyway, back to London and the other semi-final. Kramnik had ended up having to defend himself against Nakamura as White but did so without any real difficulty. He quickly gained the advantage as Black and Nakamura jettisoned the exchange to keep going. Eventually they got to this.



Nakamura-Kramnik
KO 2.2
position after 41... h6

You have to admire Nakamura's immense ability to fight on and set problems in the most unpromising of positions and here he produced **42.d7!**

Of course if 42...♔xd7 then 43.♗xh6! (or 42...♖xd7 43.♘c5+).

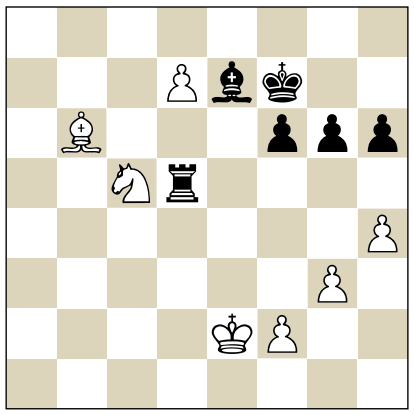
Kramnik says that he saw the best move 42...♗f8, preparing ...f5, which should win, but thought that his choice was even simpler.

However, after:

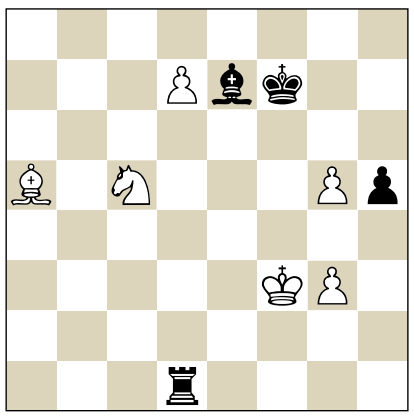
42...♔f7? 43.♘c5 ♗f8 44.♗a5 ♗e7 45.♗b6

Nakamura had managed to set up a very aesthetic (unless you're Kramnik) fortress. I can't imagine that Kramnik's thoughts at this stage (had they been in English) would have extended to many words which weren't precisely – or figuratively – of four letters: mine certainly wouldn't have.

He tried to break the fortress – one trick is that with the white king on f3 you might get in ♗xc5 d8♕ ♖xf2 mate. But of course Nakamura didn't fall for it and finally something truly dreadful (unless you're Nakamura) occurred.



45...♖d6 46.♗a5 ♖d5 47.♗b6 h5 48.♔f3 f5 49.♔g2 ♖d2 50.♗a5 ♖d5 51.♗b6 f4 52.♔f3 fxg3 53.fxg3 ♖d6 54.♗a5 ♖d4 55.♗b6 ♖d1 56.♗a5 ♖d5 57.♗b6 ♖d1 58.♗a5 g5 59.hxg5

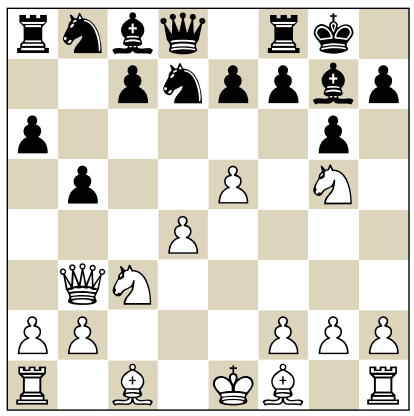


59...♔g6?! I presume that he wanted to avoid 59...♗xg5 60.♘e4 – en route to d2, though in fact 60...♖d3+ is fine, **60.♗b6 ♗xg5? 61.♘e6! ♖d3+?** 61...♗e7 still drew easily. **62.♔e4 ♖d6 63.♘xg5 ♖xd7 64.♘f3 ♖e7+? 65.♘e5+ ♔f6?? 66.♗d8** Black resigned.

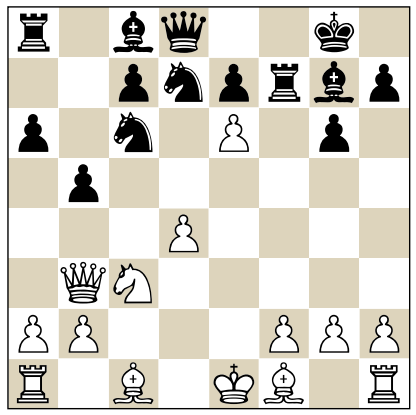
And so the final was between Nakamura and Gelfand. They began with this very tough game:

GI 10.5 – D97
Hikaru Nakamura
Boris Gelfand
London 2013 Final-1

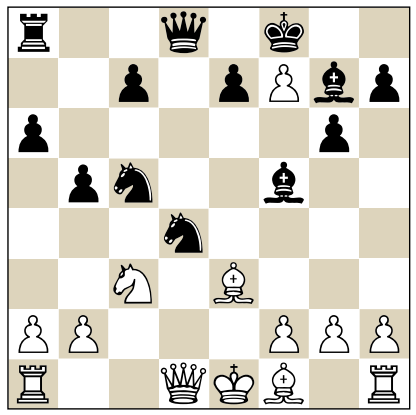
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.♕b3 dxc4 6.♕xc4 0-0 7.e4 a6 8.e5 b5 9.♕b3 ♘fd7 10.♘g5



10...♘c6 This very unusual move was obviously an excellent idea at rapidplay. **11.♘xf7** This critical response wins the exchange, since 11...♘xd4?? is not an option in view of the smothered mate 12.♘h6+ ♔h8 13.♕g8+! ♖xg8 14.♘f7 mate.
11...♖xf7 12.e6



12...♘xd4
12...♘de5 13.exf7+ ♘xf7 was another way to do it, but this looks better.
13.exf7+ ♔f8 14.♕d1 ♘c5 15.♗e3 ♗f5



Nigel Short was adamant that the slower 15...♗b7 was better. Hard to

Play with the world's best correspondence chess players on one of the most advanced chess servers in the world.

Register at: **www.iccf-webchess.com**

Join a team of thousands playing great chess at ICCF.

ICCF also offers World Championships, Olympiads, and many other Team and Individual Tournaments where you can participate from any place around the globe.

View live games of the world's best players – also free games downloads.

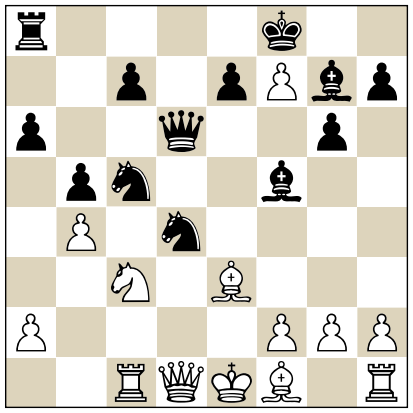
Contact us at: **www.iccf.com**

tell without some more games and analysis.

16.♖c1

Nakamura used 9 minutes on this, a huge investment at this time limit. Perhaps he ought to have bailed out with 16.♗xd4!?, when if 16...♗xd4 17.♕f3 gains a little time, and 16...♕xd4 17.♕xd4 ♗xd4 18.♖c1 looks reasonably playable but White wouldn't have many winning chances.

16...♕d6 17.b4



17...♘e4?!

After this, White is able to free himself and begin to get organised, and the momentum shifts.

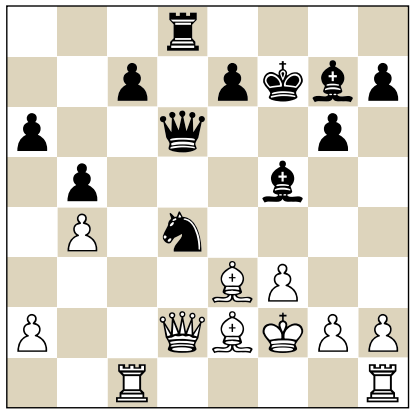
Instead, 17...♘ce6 was normal, when 18.♗d3 ♗xd3 19.♕xd3 ♕xb4 20.0-0 ♖d8 looks quite nice for Black.

But the best idea was the far from obvious 17...♖d8!! 18.bxc5 ♕e5. Black is threatening ...♘c2+ and if 19.♗e2 then 19...♘c2+ 20.♕xc2 ♗xc2 21.♖xc2 b4 22.♘d1 ♕e4 23.♖c4 ♕xg2 24.♖f1 a5 with a big advantage.

Instead, 19.h4 leaves g2 protected but Black replies 19...♘c2+ 20.♕xc2 ♗xc2 21.♖xc2 ♕f5 22.♖c1 ♕g4, threatening ...♗xc3+ and ...♖d1 mate, and if 23.♘d1 then ...♕b4+ certainly gains the advantage.

I therefore wondered about 19.h3 to control g4, but 19...♗h6! is very strong (it didn't work after 19.h4, since White can defend with 20.♖h3). 20.♘e2 ♗xe3 21.fxe3 ♘c2+ 22.♕xc2 ♗xc2 23.♖xc2 ♕xe3 24.h4 ♕d3 25.♖c3 ♕b1+ 26.♔f2 ♕xa2 27.h5 g5 is then really grim.

18.♘xe4 ♗xe4 19.f3 ♗f5 20.♕d2 ♖d8 21.♔f2 ♔xf7 22.♗e2



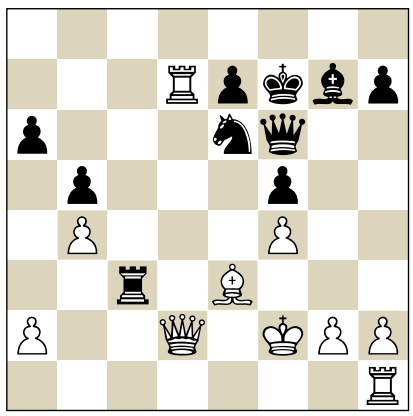
22...♕f6? A blunder, losing a vital pawn. After 22...♖d7 Black would still have had very reasonable compensation.

23.♖xc7! ♘e6

Gelfand presumably thought when he played 22...♕f6 that this was regaining the material, missing that ...♘e6 had cut the bishop's diagonal backwards and so allowed Nakamura's reply.

24.♖d7 ♖c8 25.♗d3 ♖c3 26.♗xf5 gxf5 27.f4

White has a big advantage and Nakamura converted very smoothly.



27...♖c4 28.♖c1 ♖e4 29.g3 h5 30.h4 ♕g6 31.♗c5 ♗f6 32.♖e1 ♕g4 33.♖xe4 fxe4 34.♕d1 ♕f5 35.♖d5 ♕h3 36.♕f1

And Gelfand resigned. 36...♕g4 37.♕e2 ♕h3 doesn't repeat, since White plays 38.♕xe4.

Both players had chances in the second game, but at the end it was Nakamura who had a symbolic advantage and drew to take the title. The trickiest player on the planet, he played really well throughout with only the odd blip and is a very worthy winner.

NEW IN CHESS

Striking at the right moment and not losing a single game, Hikaru Nakamura was the worthy winner of the 5th London Chess Classic.

In general there were many excellent games this year but also rather too many serious blunders. And to produce games which really will live on, it would perhaps be better to return next year to the more serious fare of classical chess. ■

London 2013

3 rounds of knock-oout

Quarter Finals	
Kramnik-Anand	1½-½
Nakamura-Short	1½-½
Adams-Svidler	3-1
Gelfand-Caruana	3-1
Semi-Finals	
Nakamura-Kramnik	1½-½
Gelfand-Adams	1½-½
Final	
Nakamura-Gelfand	1½-½

Rapid Chess

It was, as I recall, George Botterill – philosophy lecturer and twice British Chess Champion (in 1974 and 1977) – who first expounded to me the view that the greatest cultural contribution our country has made to the world is that of sport. Britain has produced some respected painters, such as Turner, Gainsborough and Reynolds, plus fine composers, such as Purcell, Elgar and Britten. Even the most ardent Anglophile, though, would have to acknowledge that these distinguished gentlemen are but dwarves compared to giants of the arts like Rembrandt and Mozart. In literature, our benefaction has been far weightier – from Shakespeare, Austen and Dickens etc. down to Nobel Laureates, like Kipling, Golding and Pinter – not to mention popular scribes such as C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien and J.K. Rowling. But, splendid as many of our writers have been, Botterill has, I think, hit the nail on the head: were it not for the creative inhabitants of a playful island nation off the coast of Europe, mankind would have been deprived of the pleasures of football, tennis, rugby, golf, cricket, hockey, badminton, squash, polo, snooker, bowls, curling and croquet. It is true that precursors of some of these games, like football, could be found in other older civilizations, but it was the Brits who had the ingenuity to codify the rules and systematically organise competitions.

Of course, British civilization did not flourish until centuries after the invention of chess, in India, but it is arguable that we have, nevertheless, played a significant role in the popularisation of at least one recent format of the game. In 1987, at the Hippodrome nightclub in Leicester Square, London, a seminal, televised six-game match took place between the reigning World Champion, Garry Kasparov, and your humble columnist. The chosen time-control was an ostensibly peculiar, but inwardly logical, 25 minutes per player (with no increment), because it was deemed by the producers to be the ideal duration for editing down to a half-hour programme. The players were stylishly clad in either black or white dinner jackets, according to colour, and pounding opening music and dry-ice provided an introductory frisson of excitement. Due to the pressure of the clock, it was an exceedingly bloodthirsty affair, with no draws – Garry eventually emerging victorious by the score of 4-2. The YouTube video of the final game has been viewed 438,000 times, at the time of writing – an impressive figure for a minority sport, and suggestive of strong untapped demand.

This Speed Chess Challenge, in the heart of the capital, was probably the first time that what is now known as 'rapid chess' (which I define here as being approximately half an hour per player) was introduced to a wide audience. It undoubtedly had antecedents, decades earlier, from the Netherlands and elsewhere, but these had barely registered a flicker in the public consciousness. Despite its success, it did not entirely meet with universal acclamation, with one or two grandmasters snootily remarking on a supposed trivialisation of the sacred rite. Little did they imagine that, within a generation, the holiest of all chess competitions – the World Championship itself – would, in the event of a tie-break, be decided in this profane manner.

As he relates in *Secret Notes*, the legendary David Bronstein proposed experimentation with faster time-controls, during the mid-1960s, as a means of curing the curse of adjournments and its attendant baleful influence on both sleep and domestic life. The Chess Federation boldly approved and, as a consequence, there came a brief flurry of such tournaments in the Soviet Union with one hour per player. The former Garry Weinstein, bearing his new name of Kasparov for the very first time, won just such an event, in Baku in 1975, ahead of Oleg Pavlenko. But Bronstein's proposal was insufficiently radical to really catch on: it lacked both the gravitas of classical chess and the thrill of the quicker tempo.

Whereas Garry was a rapid chess virgin in 1987, I had the previous June participated in the inaugural British Open Quickplay Championship – sponsored by the brewery firm Joshua Tetley, which provided the reasonably generous 1000 pounds first prize. This was by no means a weak event, as the presence of Chandler, Hodgson, Hebden, Davies, Kosten, Plaskett etc. attests, but I nevertheless managed my one Bobby Fischer moment, winning all eleven games and finishing well ahead of Colin Crouch in second place. The following year the tournament was stronger still, with the addition of Nunn, Speelman, Watson, Conquest etc., but, despite remaining undefeated, I was unable to repeat my success, finishing just behind the outright winner Nigel Davies (whom I beat) on 9½ points.

‘It amused me to think that, had I been a warped ideologue, I could have easily blown up the citadel of the Evil Empire.’

Incidentally, a highly-promising Indian teenager called Viswanathan Anand tied for a modest 7th position, just a couple of months before he would win the World Junior Championship in Baguio City.

It was not long before FIDE also got in on the act, sanctioning the first World Active Championship (as opposed to ‘passive chess’ – as Spassky would humorously remark) in Mazatlan, Mexico, in December 1988 – won by Karpov, on tie-break, ahead of Gavrikov. This ought to have been a welcome addition to the tournament calendar, but in the fraught political atmosphere of the time, it was viewed, in some quarters, as an assault on the newly-formed players’ body, the GMA. Kasparov’s forthright statement around that time – ‘I’m categorically against any attempt to create a professional competition in active chess’ (NIC 1989/7, page 54) – appears absurdly condemnatory, if not downright hypocritical, with hindsight. What on Earth was the World Champion doing trying to stop chess being played? However, when viewed against the backdrop of the wily FIDE President, Florencio Campomanes, threatening to sow discord by issuing a raft of new rapid titles, it becomes somewhat more comprehensible – even though still misguided.

Perverse political expediency was swiftly abandoned, however, the moment Intel offered to sponsor a Grand Prix, in 1994, under the aegis of the fledgling PCA. The result was a spectacular series of well-organised tournaments in major cities. The games were frequently breath-taking – like Kramnik’s sudden king march up to b7 in a King’s Indian against Garry Kimovich. A quiet personal highlight, however, as a director of the PCA, was being driven into the Kremlin, shortly after the collapse of Communism, without any security check. It amused me to think that, had I been a warped ideologue, I could have easily blown up the citadel of the ‘Evil Empire’.

Regrettably this wonderful series came to an end when the exclusivity terms of Intel’s sponsorship conflicted with Garry’s desire to play a match against IBM’s Deeper Blue. Given the enormous financial incentive, most people would have chosen exactly as he did. Perhaps, had there been any vocal support for the PCA from the grandmaster beneficiaries of the Grand Prix, who each carried off literally hundreds of thousands of dollars in prizes, things might have been different. Anyway, such solidarity was not forthcoming and we will never know.

The great beauty of rapid chess is that, unlike classical, you can easily watch it live. It provides the perfect balance between adrenalin-rush and comprehension. Blitz will always have its advocates but either they tend to forget, or simply don’t know, that an enormous proportion of the potential fan base simply cannot follow a game at that speed. If an enthusiast like Peter Davies – the driving force behind the London Chess Classic – or even my father, who plays every week at his club, cannot do it, what hope is there for the huge majority who know how to move the pieces, but have less experience?

The diverging qualities of the three main formats – classical, rapid and blitz – indicate why it would be an error to combine them onto a single rating list, and yet, if I understand my erstwhile tormentor, Garry Kimovich, correctly, this is precisely what he proposes to do, if elected in Tromsø. The marathon and the 100 metres may both involve running, but it is self-evident that they are fundamentally different disciplines. There is nothing remotely complicated about maintaining different rating lists – and they do it in other sports, like cricket, for example. There are already serious grumblings, even from his own supporters, which may grow into a clamour as he strides closer to the FIDE Presidency. With an otherwise excellent programme, it is hard to see what is to be gained by pursuing an unnecessary policy that is conceptually flawed.

In recent years, publishers have commissioned biographies of ever-more obscure, peripheral chess figures. I have read the weighty McFarland hardback of Albert Beauregard Hodges from beginning to end and I still can’t tell you anything about him. Quite possibly this is because I am a philistine, or an amnesiac, but the alternative explanation is that Hodges’ life is not an inherently interesting subject. Far better would be for some proper researcher to examine the enormous wealth of material on rapid chess and write its definitive history. With luck, this briefest of sketches may serve as a catalyst. ■

Lajos Portisch

Lajos
A matter of style?

Mihail Marin

The more years pass, the stronger my feeling that our favourite game is too complex to suit a rigorous classification in distinct categories. We tend to speak about opening, middlegame and endgame, or tactics and strategy, but although this certainly has some didactic value, can it really catch the essence of the matter?

Chess is a mixture of unity and diversity. Play in the different phases of the game obeys the same very abstract rules, only that our short-term thinking formulates them differently for the opening and the endgame, for instance. And if we were to divide the elements, would it be really enough to use only a handful of categories? Hardly...

We have a similar situation when it comes to the specific style of a certain player. We can describe him as strategic, tactical, attacking, defensive, but little more. If we take the World Champions from the classical era, we have the paradoxical situation of classifying 13 completely different individual players into fewer than half a dozen categories. This is similar to the so-called 'boxes method' from mathematics, an alternative to the method of reductio ad absurdum.

Things are not really any easier when it comes to defining one's own style. Here we interfere with subjectivity and our lifetime dreams.

Some time ago, I was surprised to read Kortchnoi's comment that his weakest part was strategic mastery. In my humble opinion, he was at least not worse (and definitely more complex) strategically than his historic rival Karpov, who used to outplay him mainly in the openings and in concrete play. Still, I can understand that such a statement was dictated by Kortchnoi's famous spirit of exigent self-criticism.

Recently, I came across a brief self-portrait of another player I used to follow a lot as a teenager: Lajos Portisch. 'Positional. I was always very positional [...] Tactically I was very weak in the beginning.' (On Chessbase.com)

Portisch's style has always looked far more puzzling to me than that. Of course, a player who stayed amongst the top elite for decades would have to have a strong positional basis, but strategy would not necessarily be the predominant or only facet.

In this article I will try to offer a somewhat surprising image of a man whom I consider one of the most imposing but at the same time most original players of the classical period. As usual, I have chosen games that are not widely known, but are quite relevant for my general discourse.

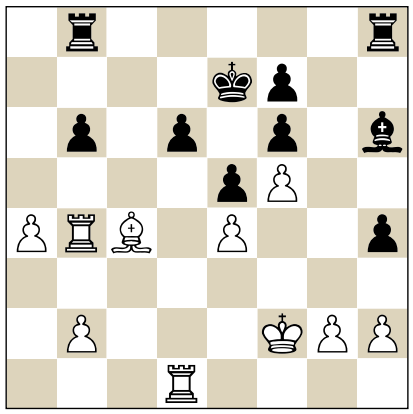
In a good game, tactics and strategy should go hand in hand all the way. If, after achieving a notable strategic

Portisch

Lajos Portisch, one of the most imposing but at the same time most original players of the classical period.

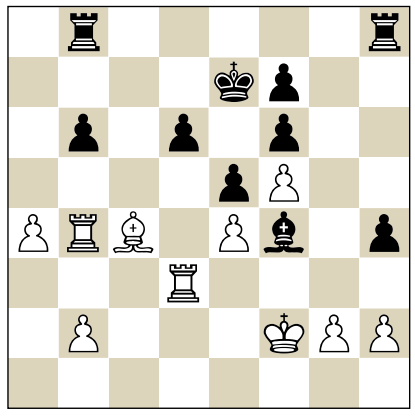
MAX EUWE CENTRE AMSTERDAM

advantage, one player starts thinking only in strategic terms, the tables may be turned at any time. In the first example below, Portisch spots a well-hidden tactical idea, allowing him to win from an inferior position.

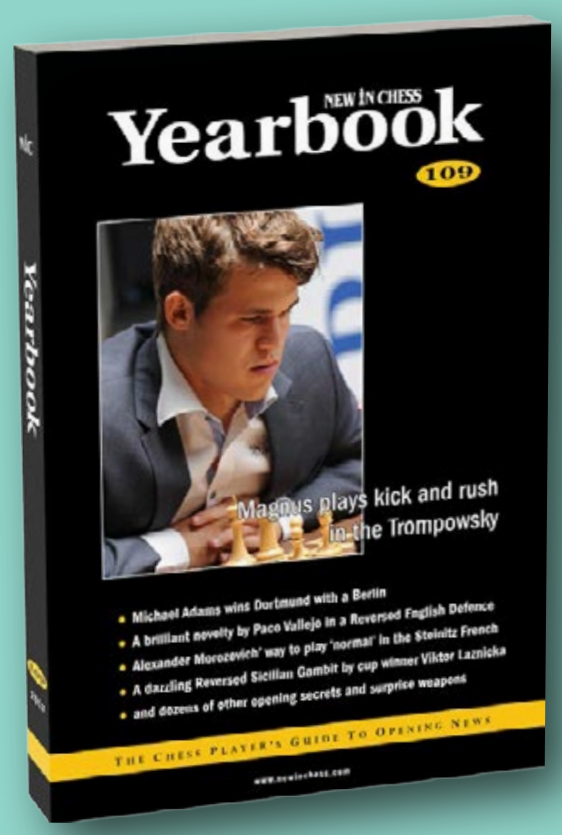


Smyslov-Portisch
Portoroz 2nd match game 1971

It does not take too deep a look at the position to see that Smyslov has outplayed Portisch in the latter's trademark Najdorf Sicilian. On the queenside and in the centre, White has open files for his rooks and clear targets on b6, d6 and even on f7!
On top of that, the presence of opposite-coloured bishops offers attacking chances, but this aspect may boomerang: if not handled correctly, it could easily turn against White.
With his next move, Portisch tries to put his bishop to work; the only reasonable plan.
27...♗f4 Being restricted by the central pawns, the black bishop has a far shorter range than its rival, but if White spends a tempo on parrying ...♗xh2, with h2-h3 or g2-g3, some kingside counterplay may start.
28.♖d3?! The decision to ignore the threat is right, but its execution is imperfect. Of course, 28...♗xh2?! 29.♖db3 would offer White a very strong initiative, but Portisch had secretly designed a more glorious fate for his bishop than grabbing that pawn.
As pointed out by Portisch, 28.♗a6! would have been very strong. White prevents the activation of the black king's rook on the c-file without really slowing down his own attack, since 28...♗xh2?! allows 29.♖c1!.



28...♖hc8! A clever way to parry 29.♖db3, in view of 29...♗d2.
29.♗d5?! Smyslov firmly believes in his attack, ignoring what he must have considered Black's temporary activity. He might have thought that the more cautious 29.♗b3, preventing ...♖c2+, would also slow down White. In fact, after 29...♗xh2 30.♖c3 ♖xc3 31.bxc3


NEW IN CHESS
Yearbook
109
Magnus plays kick and rush in the Trompowsky
Michael Adams wins Dortmund with a Berlin
A brilliant novelty by Paco Vallejo in a Reversed English Defence
Alexander Morozevich' way to play 'normal' in the Steinitz French
A dazzling Reversed Sicilian Gambit by cup winner Viktor Laznicka
and dozens of other opening secrets and surprise weapons
THE CHESS PLAYER'S GUIDE TO OPENING NEWS
www.newinchess.com

NEW IN CHESS Yearbook 109
The Chess Player's Guide to Opening News

With answers to urgent questions like:

- What is the best way for Black to handle the Trompowsky according to Carlsen?
- Is the gambit 5...d5 in the Reversed Sicilian just an opening trick?
- What is Aronian's latest winning try against the Symmetrical English?
- How did Morozevich increase Black's possibilities in the Steinitz French?
- What is the most aggressive way to avoid the Leningrad Dutch?
- Can you apply the Evans Gambit to the Bird Ruy Lopez?
- Why does nobody play Capablanca's 5.♘c3 in the Exchange Spanish?
- Can putting a knight on h7 save Black in the Rauzer?
- Why doesn't Leko play the Sveshnikov any more?
- Is the Damiano Petroff only suitable for blitz, as Alexander Ipatov claims?
- What was Anand's fantastic novelty in the Gallagher King's Indian?
- What does Glenn Flear think of Sergey Kasparov's *Steamrolling the Sicilian* with 5.f3?
- Can Ju Wenjun keep playing 13...0-0 in the 6.♗g5 Najdorf?

and many more!

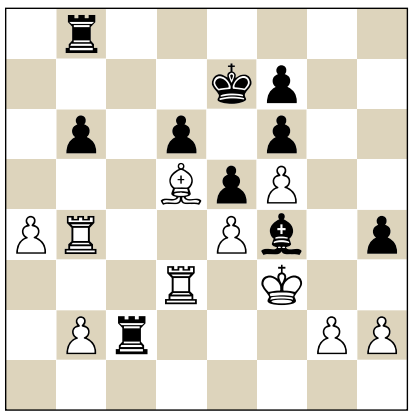
For the contents of Yearbook 109 see www.newinchess.com/latestYB

paperback - 256 pages - €29.95

"A must-have book for both chess enthusiast and chess professional." – *Carsten Hansen, ChessCafe*

Black is not in time to defend b6 along the g1-a7 diagonal and remove the rook from the b-file. This makes a4-a5-a6 a very unpleasant threat, maintaining White's advantage.
It is remarkable that now and on the previous move Smyslov did not feel the hidden danger. And when he finally gets Portisch's idea, he goes to the other extreme, overestimating it and missing the last train to a draw.

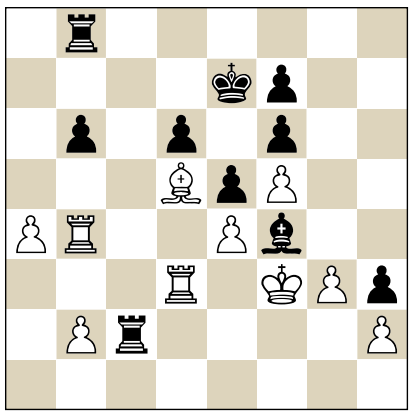
29...♖c2+ 30.♔f3



Things seem to go according to plan. Threats like 31.♖c3 ♖xc3 32.bxc3, followed by a4-a5, or simply 31.♖db3, look killing, while 30...♗xh2 does not add force to Black's counterattack. But now Portisch plays his trump card.

30...h3!! This move seems to just kill the activity of the own bishop and is easy to overlook. Even after it has been effectuated on the board, its idea is not all that obvious.

31.g3 Of course, 31.gxh3? ♖xh2, followed by ...♖g8, would lead to a typical attack with opposite-coloured bishops, with tragic consequences for White. After the game move one would expect 31...♗g5 32.♖c3, when White's attack would be more rapid.



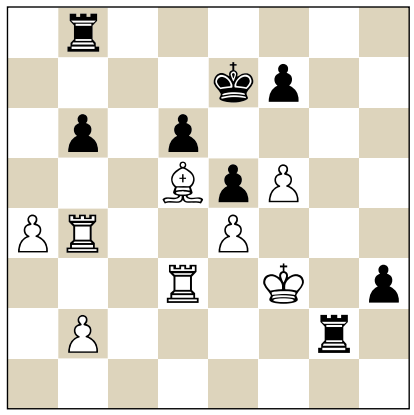
31...♖xh2! The point. With the previous move, Black has weakened the g2-square, and now he weakens g3 as well. Black builds up his attack methodically, which is typical for positional play, but he leaves a bishop en prise on the way, which logically relates to tactics. The immediate threat is doubling rooks on the g-file and delivering mate.

'When given a chance, Portisch would change the character of the fight, striving for the initiative by means of unexpected moves and relying on hidden defects in his opponent's setup.'

In many lines the black bishop would act like a pawn (a tall one with its head divided in two), but even so Black's attack is very strong. White's main problem is that his beautifully placed bishop cannot take part in the kingside fight, at least not directly.
In his comments for the *Informant*, Portisch evaluates the position as winning for Black, overlooking a hidden defensive resource.

32.♖c3?

Facing unexpected problems, Smyslov fails to keep a cool head and starts counterplay that is doomed to fail.
He must have stopped his calculation after 32.gxf4! ♖g2 33.fxe5 fxe5, with the deadly threat of ...♖bg8.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

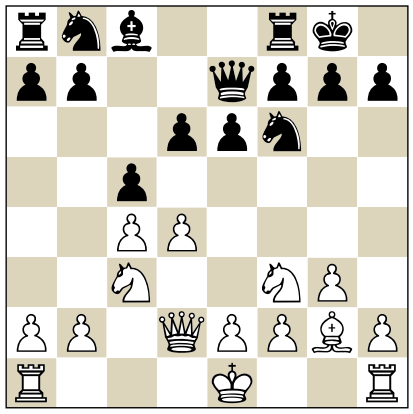
Still, he could have saved the game using the same method as Portisch, giving up his bishop for a pawn: 34.♗xf7!. In order to renew the threat, Black has to take his king one step further from the c-file: 34...♔xf7 35.♖c4 ♖bg8 36.♖c7+, with the inevitable rook exchange and an approximately equal endgame.
In the game, the counterplay along the c-file will fail, since the black king will be in time to cover the c8-square.

32...♖g2! The net is tightening around the king. The strongest threat is ...♖g8. **33.♖c7+** Hurrying to catch the h-pawn somehow. The pawn would queen after 33.g4 ♖g3+ 34.♔f2 h2. **33...♔d8 34.♖xf7 ♖xg3+ 35.♔f2 h2 36.♖h7 ♖g1** And Portisch won quickly.

The final part of this game reminds me of Alekhine's confession that, due to his outstanding tactical vision, he had reached the dangerous conclusion that he could save any position, no matter how bad. I do not want to suggest that Portisch is similar to Alekhine, far from it, but my feeling is that they share at least this kind of tactical ability.

Portisch had a marked tendency for enterprising play. When given a chance, he would change the character of the fight, striving for the initiative by means of unexpected moves and relying on hidden defects in his opponent's set-up.

In the following game we will see a double switch: from almost static to dynamic play and then to a static and one-sided position.



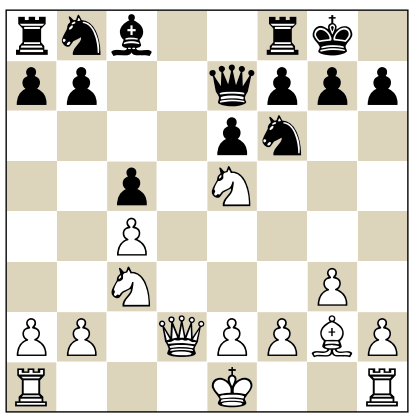
Portisch-Parma
Portoroz/Ljubljana 1985

Black's last move (8...c5) is slightly unusual for the Bogo-Indian; in most cases Black attacks the centre with ...e6-e5. A solid positional approach would now be 9.0-0, maintaining the tension, but Portisch prefers to give play a concrete character.

9.dxc5!? Giving up the strategic advantage in the centre for the sake of making the best out of his advance in development. Portisch meets an original opening idea in an equally original way!

9...dxc5 10.♘e5!

The only logical follow-up of the previous move. Otherwise, 10...♘c6 would offer Black excellent play.



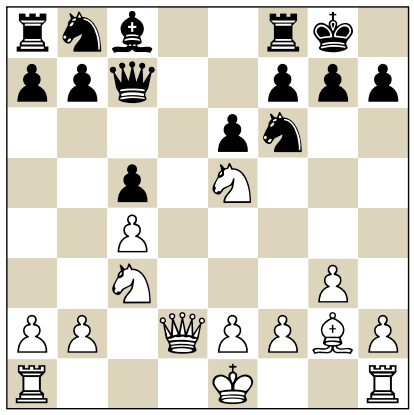
10...♕c7

One should not make too many queen moves while underdeveloped, but Black understood quite well that there is no easy solution to his problems.

If 10...♘bd7, then 11.♘xd7 ♕xd7 12.0-0-0 and White would get absolute control of the only open file, while 10...♖d8 11.♕e3 just helps White improve the queen's position by defending the knight in advance.

Black's last move tries to make the best use of the square made available by ...c7-c5, but I feel that precisely here we can find the drawback of Black's opening plan.

In the Bogo-Indian, e7 is a perfect square for the queen. After the advance of the c-pawn, the c7-square also seems to start asking for the visit of Her Majesty. It often happens that a player has two pieces competing for the same excellent square. The situation is reverted here, which may become a positive factor after completing the development in the way that it allows switching from one wing to another. Black is far from that in the current position and he will soon lose control over both aforementioned squares.

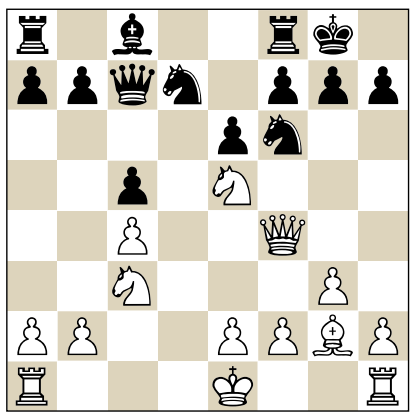


11.♕f4!

The start of a subtle manoeuvre aimed at taking advantage of the exposed position of the enemy queen by opposing to it the white queen on a defended square.

The impulsive 11.♘b5?, with a similar basic idea, is unsound: 11...♕xe5 12.f4 ♕f5 13.♘c7 ♗d7, with excellent play for the exchange Black will lose, for instance 14.♗xb7 ♗c6 15.♗xa8 ♕e4 and White's pieces are hanging.

11...♘bd7

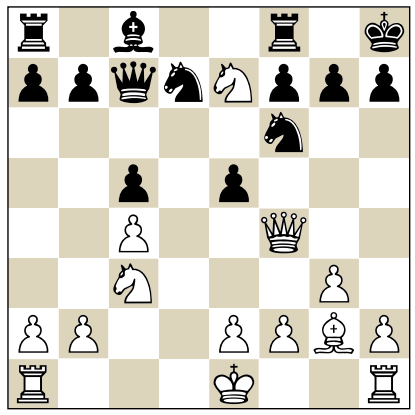


What now? Black's idea would be justified after 12.♘xd7 ♕xf4 13.gxf4 ♗xd7!, with normal development for Black. The idea behind 10...♕c7 is that after the queen has departed from d2, ♗xb7 ...♖ab8 retrieves the b2-pawn.

12.♘g6! The mechanism that makes this possible is simple, but evaluating the final consequences of the more or less forced variation needs a long eye indeed.

12...e5 Black is fighting back with all his forces. If 12...♕xf4 13.♘e7+ ♔h8 14.gxf4 White exerts strong minor-piece pressure on his opponent's underdeveloped queenside.

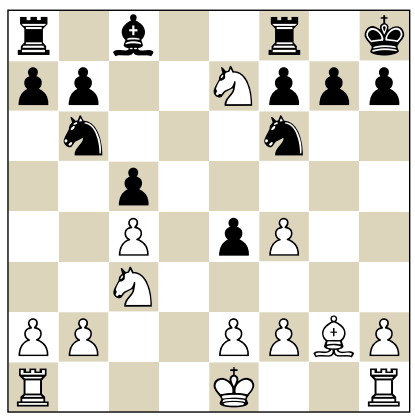
13.♘e7+ ♔h8



14.♕f3 Maintaining the rhythm of the initiative. 14.♕e3 does not put pressure on b7, allowing 14...♘b6 15.♘xc8 ♖axc8 with more or less normal play for Black.

14...e4! A nice resource, based on 15.♘xe4? ♘e5, winning the e7-knight.

15.♕f4 ♕xf4 16.gxf4 ♘b6

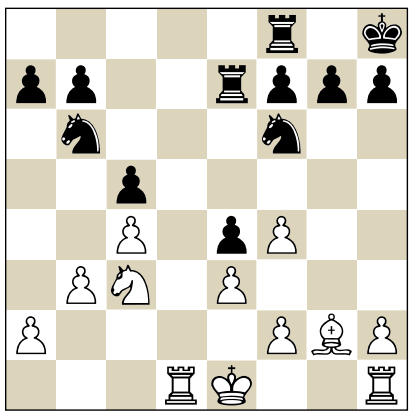


At first sight, Black has made significant progress. The e4-pawn is taboo because of the pin along the e-file, the c4-pawn is under attack and he needs

just one more move to complete his development. Had Portisch gone wrong somewhere?

17.♘xc8!! This knight jumps for the fifth time in this game, just to exchange a bishop which had not moved at all! According to the general rules of development, it sounds absolutely inconceivable! And yet, one may remember Steinitz's old finding that the advance in development needs to be transformed into some palpable form of advantage. Let us play a few more moves before applying this idea in this game.

17...♖axc8 18.b3 ♖ce8 19.e3 ♖e7 20.♖d1



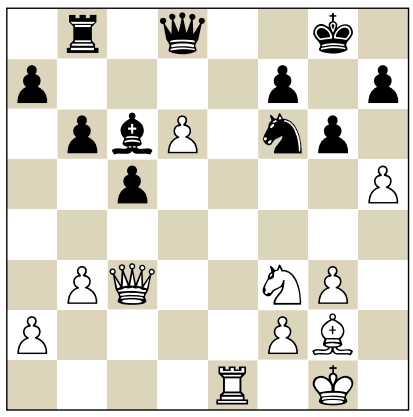
Black has an entirely normal development, but the permanent weakness of the e-pawn prevents him from fighting for the only open file. White can double rooks and then look for ways to increase the pressure, which he actually did.

It would be interesting to know whether Portisch had more or less foreseen and evaluated this position when he played 11.♕f4 or at least when he chose 14.♕f3. Most of his choices of move look unexpected, but with hindsight one gets the feeling that they make part of a deep and crystal-clear plan.

Things are different for his opponent. Faced with what may look frequent changes of plan, he would have to permanently readjust his assessment and his own plans. It is thought that in a normal game there are just a few critical moments in which a long think is required; against Portisch it frequently looks as if the game is littered with critical moments all the way. Under such demanding circumstances, time-trouble and fatigue are almost unavoidable...

This aspect makes me think that a comparison between Portisch and Lasker, who introduced psychological factors in the battle between the pieces, is not entirely out of place.

The following game is one of my favourites, although it is by no means perfect. With respect to my comments above, the additional element is Portisch's unchained aggressiveness in a simply superior position.



Portisch-Matanovic
Adelaide 1971

BORIS DOLMATOVSKY

A Russian fan asks for an autograph. Because Lajos Portisch was the 'Hungarian Botvinnik' or because he very much had a style of his own?

White's advantage is indisputable. He is better coordinated and has two advanced pawns. The only technical problem seems to be that both pawns are under attack.

25.h6!? A very strong move, half-pinning the knight by creating several mating ideas. From the available solutions it is the most difficult to handle over the board, requiring accurate calculation every step of the way.

In fact, the d6-pawn is so strong that the simple 25.hxg6 hxg6 26.♕d2 threatening ♖e7 is very unpleasant.

But even better seems to be 25.♕d2!, holding both h5xg6 and h5-h6 in reserve. If 25...♘xh5 26.♘e5 ♗xg2 27.♔xg2 Black is helpless against threats like ♘c6, ♕d5 or d7.

There would be no satisfactory defence against ♖e7, for instance 25...♗d5 26.♘g5 or 25...♘e4 26.♕f4.

In my opinion, a really positional player would have chosen one of these lines. Instead, Portisch goes for a spectacular attack with surprising blows, very much in the style of Mikhail Tal! And just like the Wizard from Riga, Portisch seems to have played this game for his own artistic pleasure more than anything else!

NEW!

Deep Fritz 14

Single-processor engines are a thing of the past – that's why the new Fritz comes as a powerful multi-processor version right from the word go. Deep Fritz 14 features a 64-bit engine and supports up to eight processor cores simultaneously.

That's where the similarities end, however, as the engine itself has been completely redesigned and packs almost 100 Elo points more than the previous version, putting Deep Fritz 14 amongst the strongest chess programs in the world.

Optimized for Windows 8.1: With its novel 64-bit program interface, Deep Fritz 14 runs faster and flows better on the latest versions of Windows. Naturally, the new version retains all of the well-known playing, training and analysis functions that made Fritz the most popular chess program in the world.

Go Premium: Log on to the Playchess.com server with Deep Fritz 14 and tune in to exciting live commentary of world-class tournaments, or take part in training sessions with frontrunner coaches such as Grandmasters Daniel King, Yasser Seirawan, Maurice Ashley, Dr. Karsten Müller and many more. Deep Fritz 14 includes a free six-month Premium membership to Playchess.com.

Only the best is good enough. Deep Fritz 14 gives you access to "Let's Check", the world's largest database packed with high-quality analysis. Over 200 million positions annotated with deep engine calculations are saved on the Let's Check server, with more being added every day. If you want to know what to think of a particular opening position, take a look on Let's Check and find out in seconds what it would take your PC hours to uncover.

69,90 €

System requirements for Deep Fritz 14 und Houdini 4:

Minimum: Pentium III 1 GHz, 2 GB RAM, Windows Vista, XP (Service Pack 3), 7/8, DirectX9, 256 MB graphics card, DVD-ROM drive, Windows Media Player 9 and Internet access for program activation, access to Playchess.com, Let's Check and program updates.

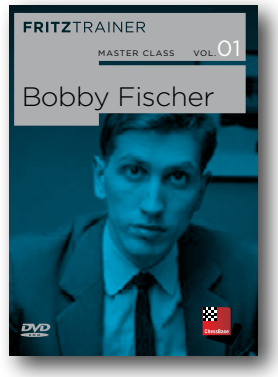
Coming soon: Houdini 4

Combine the new version of the world's strongest chess engine with the most popular chess interface! Houdini 4 is delivered with the new 64 bit GUI of Deep Fritz 14 and among others includes the Premium membership to playchess.com for 6 months.

Houdini 4 Standard 79,90 €
Houdini 4 Pro 99,90 €

Available from December 2013!

Master Class Vol. 1 – Bobby Fischer



No other World Champion was more infamous both inside and outside the chess world than Robert James Fischer. But what were the secrets to his sensational ability, and what enabled him to take on the Soviet school of chess alone – and win? On this DVD, a team of experts looks at every facet of the chess legend, and shows you the winning techniques and strategies employed by the 11th World Champion.

- Video running time: approx. 5 hours (English)
- Interactive tactics test with video feedback and much more!

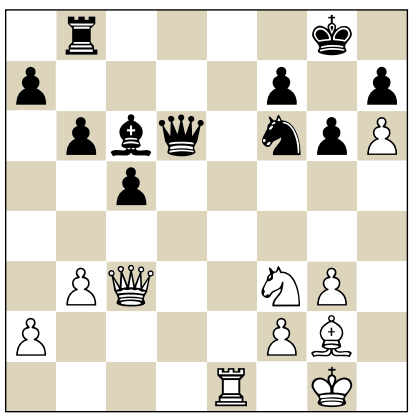
29,90 €

CHESSBASE GMBH · OSTERBEKSTRASSE 90A · D-22083 HAMBURG · TEL ++(49) 40/639060-12 · FAX ++(49) 40/6301282 · WWW.CHESSBASE.COM · INFO@CHESSBASE.COM
CHESSBASE DEALER: NEW IN CHESS · P.O. Box 1093 · NL-1810 KB Alkmaar · phone (+31)72 5127137 · fax (+31)72 5158234 · **WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM**

25...♕xd6

Black cannot tolerate this pawn, of course; he has enough trouble with its colleague!

There was no time for an intermediate exchange on f3, as 25...♗xf3? is strongly met with 26.d7! (threatening ♖e8+, followed by mate on g7 soon) 26...♕xd7 27.♕xf6 ♕d4. Did Black manage to defend? 28.♖e5!. Not really! We will see this killing interference of the long diagonal in other lines below.



26.♘e5!

Another tactical finesse, forcing the bishop to abandon the long diagonal.

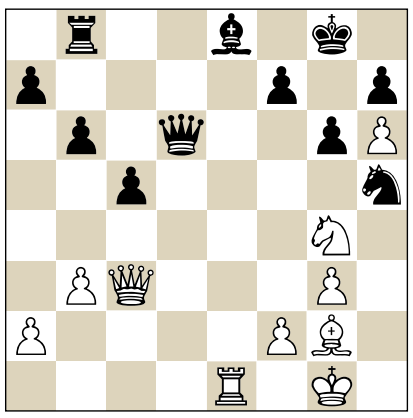
26...♗e8

For the second time, the careless attempt to exchange the bishop with 26...♗xg2? allows a strong intermediate move on the d7-square: 27.♘d7! ♕xd7 28.♕xf6 ♕d4, and by now you surely have guessed the killing move: 29.♖e5!.

27.♘g4

Pushing the other black minor piece away from its optimal square.

27...♘h5



Black's position looks suspicious, but is there anything concrete to justify the pawn sacrifice? It would be good to attack the h5-knight with 28.♖e5 (?), but this would drop White's own knight to 28...♕d1+ 29.♔h2 ♕xg4, and the bad thing is that after 30.♖xh5, defending the long diagonal with 30...♕d4 works well, just this time!

28.♗d5!

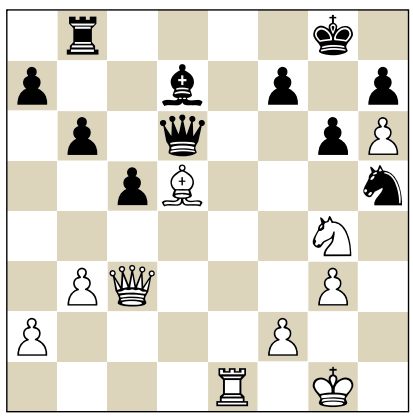
A brilliant move, which Portisch must have foreseen when playing 25.h6!?. White defends the d-file, threatening ♖e5. At the same time, the bishop is taboo: 28...♕xd5? 29.♘f6+ ♘xf6 30.♕xf6 ♕d4 and, no longer a surprise, 31.♖e5 is curtains.

28...♗d7

Hitting the troublesome knight.

If 28...♕f8 29.♘f6+ ♘xf6 30.♕xf6 Black's position is desperately passive. For instance, 30...♕xh6 loses on the spot to 31.♖xe8+!.

Maybe 28...♗c6 was a better, although not entirely satisfactory try: after 29.♗xc6 (29.♖e5 ♗xd5 30.♖xh5 is not entirely clear after 30...♔f8) 29...♕xc6 30.♖e7 ♖d8 Black has obtained some relief and even got some threats, but his knight remains desperately passive. The calm 31.♕e1 would defend the back rank, threatening both ♖xa7 and ♖xf7, with an obvious white advantage.



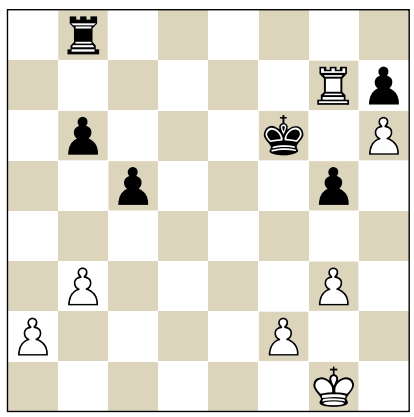
29.♖e5?

This natural move (attacking implies moving forward, is it not so?) spoils the game.

The more subtle 29.♖d1! would have been very strong. There is no satisfactory way in which Black can parry the discovered attack ♗xf7+.

It is possible that Portisch did not see that 29...♕e7 allows 30.♗xf7+!+ ♕xf7 31.♘e5, retrieving the bishop and retaining a decisive attack.

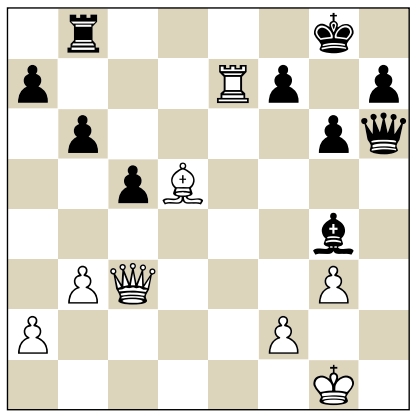
Black would have nothing better than get into a bad rook ending: 29...♗e6 30.♘f6+ ♘xf6 31.♕xf6 ♕f8 32.♗xe6 fxe6 33.♕xe6+ ♕f7 34.♕xf7+ ♔xf7 35.♖d7+ ♔f6 (35...♔g8 36.♖xa7 is too passive for Black) 36.♖xa7 g5 37.♖g7.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

White prevents ...♔g6 and threatens to activate his own king. Black is in some sort of zugzwang, as he cannot afford to leave any of his queenside pawns undefended, for instance 37...♖a8 38.♖xh7 ♔g6 39.♖b7 and if 39...♖a6 then 40.h7, winning.

29...♗xg4 30.♖xh5 ♕f8 31.♖e5 ♕xh6 32.♖e7

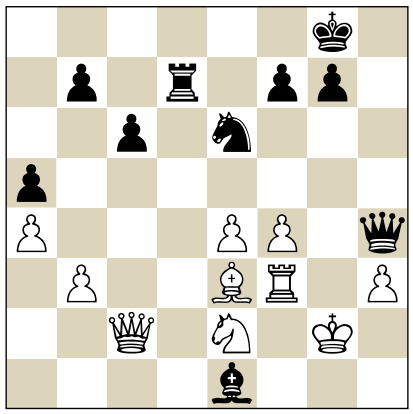


Matanovic is rightly claiming that now it was best to return both extra pawns with 32...♕g7, leading to approximate equality. Instead, he played **32...♖f8?!** and after **33.♕c4** eventually lost.

Looking at the first sequence of this fragment, I get the feeling that the god

of arts decided that Portisch deserved to win, despite his inaccuracy at the critical moment.

In the next fragment, there will be almost no tactics involved, but this did not make things simpler for Portisch's opponent. We will follow a long series of unexpected moves, very much in the spirit of the discourse preceding the game against Matanovic.



Cebalo-Portisch
Reggio Emilia 1985/86

White has some structural defects and his king is exposed. It looks as if Black should search for a way of starting an attack, but instead of this Portisch initiates a series of surprising... retreating moves.

While replaying the game I had the feeling that Cebalo defended well against the disparate step-by-step threats, but failed to anticipate the power of Black's global regrouping, which in the end of the game turns out to look like a very coherent plan.

I also noticed an element that must have been very confusing for White: the first five moves are played alternatively on the right and left sides of the board. I cannot help remembering a mock indignant remark by Iulius Armas during the 1985 Romanian championship: 'One move on the left, one move on the right; for God's sake, this is the national final!'

31...♕d8

The only reasonable purpose of this move seems to be preparing ...♗e1-d2, so White anticipates it by removing the queen from the second rank.

32.♕c4 ♘f8

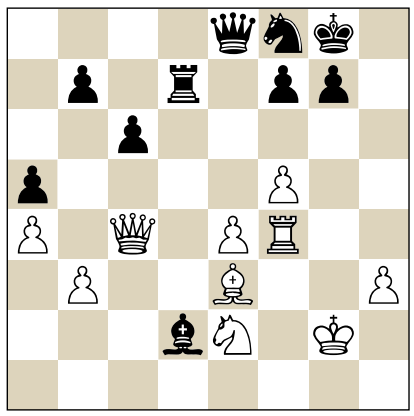
A new idea behind the queen is revealed now: after the h4-square has been cleared, there is the threat of ...♘g6-h4.

33.f5 There seems to be nothing better. White hopes that the black knight will not reach the wonderful e5-square in time.

33...♕e8 It was quite typical for Portisch to spot hidden geometrical ideas behind such moves. At first sight, it is all about putting pressure on e4, which again means that the previous move had one more purpose than it looked, viz. the clearance of the e-file.

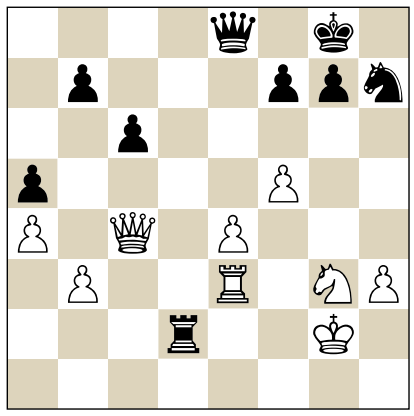
34.♖f4 A prophylactic answer, overdefending e4 before it gets under attack. But now the e3-bishop is undefended and can be pinned.

34...♗d2 The last retreat, but with some threatening character already.



35.♖f3 Aiming to keep the tension and probably wondering what is actually going on. 35.♗xd2 ♖xd2 36.♔f1 ♕e5 offers Black too much play.

35...♘h7 And again the e4-pawn is in some danger. **36.♘g3** You cannot defend something (the pawn) without leaving something else undefended (the second rank). **36...♗xe3 37. ♖xe3 ♖d2+** This is much stronger than it looks at first sight.



38.♖e2?

This natural defence gives Portisch the opportunity to reveal the deep geometrical meaning of ...♕d8-e8.

I believe that against the relatively better 38.♔g1 he would have delivered another surprising (and, I would say, Portisch trademark) move: 38...♕d8!?. It would be naive to consider this a waste of time or lack of resoluteness. The circumstances have changed over the past few moves. All White's pieces defend the e4-pawn, but the dark squares are unattended, so Black switches to threats like ...♕b6 or ...♕h4. White's position is difficult to hold together.

38...b5!

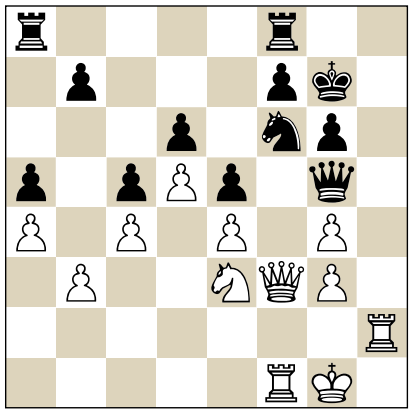
As simple as that: Black wins the e4-pawn. Cebalo's blunder is entirely excusable: for several moves, the queen displayed no activity along the a4-e8 diagonal, being obstructed by the rook, but it all changed in an instant. After this, Cebalo quickly resigned.

In Soviet circles, Portisch used to be called 'the Hungarian Botvinnik'. Portisch himself does not understand why and I entirely agree. Botvinnik's play was strategically ambitious, but pretty linear and so were his comments. I do not remember memorable games by the Patriarch in which he seemed to change plans on every move!

The kind of retreating moves like in the game against Cebalo, meant to confuse his opponent, was a constant thread in Portisch's games over the decades. However, while he was still aspiring to enter the top echelons of chess, it did not always work out well. Here is a tragic example.

In order to clinch a play-off match for a place in the Candidates' Tournament in Stockholm, Portisch needed to win his last-round game. His theoretical chances of success seemed quite high, since his opponent occupied bottom (23rd) place by a 'comfortable' margin.

For a while, things went reasonably well for Portisch.



Aaron-Portisch
Stockholm Interzonal 1962

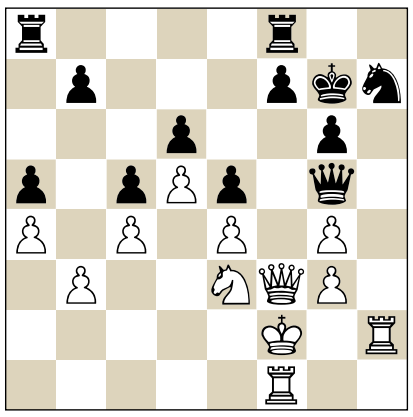
Black's play is more pleasant, but the blocked character of the position and White's smart display of pieces make finding a strengthening plan difficult. The next two moves are reminiscent of the mysterious manoeuvres from the previous game.

28...♘h7

The knight clears the way for the queen, which in its turn will clear the g5-square for the knight. Quite harmonious thinking.

29.♔f2

Preparing to double rooks on the h-file, which would be harmless against virtually any black move except that played by Portisch.



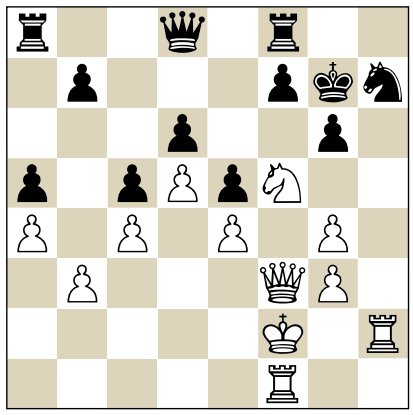
29...♕d8?

This looks fine. After ...♘g5, ♕g2, Black would play ...♕b6 followed by ...♖h8, causing White problems with keeping both wings under control. A wonderful distribution of pieces!

In actual fact, disconnecting the rooks for even an instant is not such a good idea.

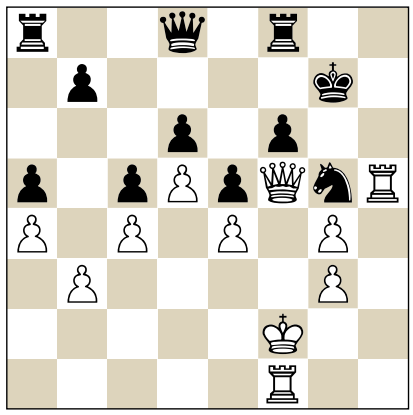
The correct way to implement the plan was 29...♕e7, although it would practically lose a tempo compared to the line designed by Portisch.

30.♘f5+!



This type of combination was in the air, but the reasons why it works will be revealed in a few moves.

30...gxf5 31.♕xf5 ♘g5 32.♖h5 f6



33.♖fh1

There is no satisfactory defence against 34.♖h7+. With the queen on e7, 33...♖h8 would repel the attack, but in the game it will cost Portisch his queen and his chance for the playoff.

It is interesting that this 'accident' was not an isolated case; throughout his prodigious career Portisch displayed a chronic vulnerability against outsiders. It could be that the facet of his style highlighted above is more effective against strong players, who are more prone to automatic tactical and strategic moves, and easier to nudge out of their familiar patterns. A weaker player would be less troubled by having to treat each successive position as completely new, since this is what his lack of experience forces him to do anyway!

Still, this secret weakness did not affect Portisch's career too much. He qualified for the Candidates' no fewer than eight times, despite his repeated losses to outsiders. What must have bothered him more were his relatively poor results against the giants of his time: Fischer, Karpov and Kasparov. In fact, I find the reason behind Portisch' systematic failure against Karpov (the World Champion during the Hungarian's best years) quite intriguing and worth investigating in a future article.

> 'In Soviet circles, Portisch used to be called "the Hungarian Botvinnik". Portisch himself does not understand why and I entirely agree.'

So, how would I describe Portisch' style in just a few lines? His insight is *very positional* indeed, but his way of expressing himself tends to be tactical. He constantly looks for exceptions, keeping his mind creative for each move, which indirectly adds a psychological dimension to his play. Since I have made references to several World Champions from the past, we can also infer that Portisch's style is universal. But above all I would say that Portisch really enjoyed playing chess, game by game and move by move... ■

Interview

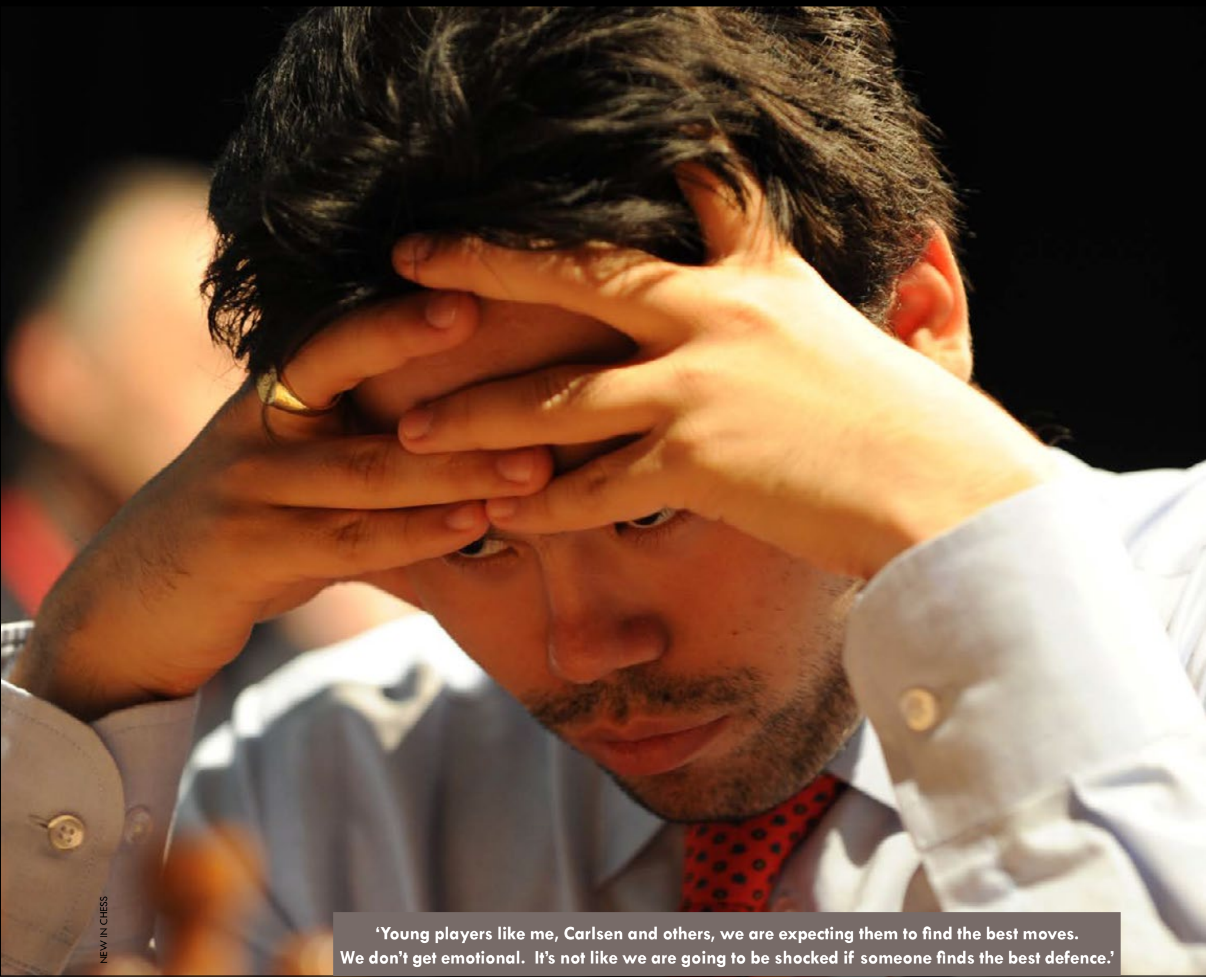
‘I do feel that at the moment I am the biggest threat to Carlsen’

His win in the London Classic was the uplifting end of a year full of changes. Hikaru Nakamura is happy with the stability he has found and the way his chess is improving. His only regret is that he didn’t reach 2800, but that’s an ambition he hopes to fulfil in the new year. In a frank conversation with **Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam**, the current number three in the world rankings talks about his new approach, gives his take on the match in Chennai and explains why he believes that in the end he may be the best candidate to challenge Magnus Carlsen. And why it is fairly ridiculous that he has to exercise patience as he didn’t qualify for Khanty-Mansiysk. ‘Four players in the Top-10 who are not in the Candidates’ tournament certainly shows that there is a problem with the format.’

W

Was your win in the London Classic the perfect way to end the year and look ahead to the new one?

‘In general it showed that I am improving, certainly. I had many chances throughout the year to win tournaments, and unfortunately things didn’t quite go the right way. I had a few collapses. It somehow makes up



NEW IN CHESS

'Young players like me, Carlsen and others, we are expecting them to find the best moves. We don't get emotional. It's not like we are going to be shocked if someone finds the best defence.'

for not having won the Tal Memorial, for example, or the Paris Grand Prix. It's still rapid, but I think having won at least a tournament this year is very good, even though I would have preferred if it had been one of the other ones.'

Your true preference remains classical; that's where the real prizes are divided?
'Still it's good to see you have chances with rapid, with the World Cup in mind and also with there being world blitz and world rapid tournaments. And there are tournaments like the Tal Memorial where there is a blitz tournament before. So it's still good to play well.'

You see a reassessment of faster chess, now that it plays a role in serious tournaments more often?
'I still much prefer classical, just because of the higher quality of chess. But for the general spectator it is quite good to see rapid and blitz, because there are a lot more errors. As a serious player I prefer more precise and more perfect games per se, but fans prefer decided games, and if both players play very accurately, more often than not it is going to be a draw. That's the question – what is better, absolutely perfect games and a lot of draws, or rapid and blitz where you will have more decisive results.'

The fact that there are more mistakes creates the impression that it's easier to understand.
'One of the problems of chess is that it's becoming more and more drawish. So if you see more decisive games it's *in general* better for the people who are watching. In general. You talk to someone, any sport, any game, and they're gonna want to know who is winning. Who won? With so many draws happening it's not very good in terms of finding an easy awareness and interest.'

What was it that you liked about your play in London? What were you happy with?

'On the one hand, I was happy with the way I played, especially in the middlegames and the endgames. I didn't really prepare much in the way of openings before the event. One of the things I don't like about rapid tournaments where you have to qualify and then have a knock-out phase, is that you have to switch modes. For example, in Geneva (the Geneva Chess Masters last June – DJtG), it was very similar. You don't prepare much and you are taking it easy, but then when I had to play Kramnik, I couldn't switch modes, from playing offbeat openings to playing seriously. In London, when it really mattered, I was able to switch from sort of offbeat to more solid.'

Is that a new approach for you? That you avoid theoretical discussions and go for the middlegame and endgame and show that you are in form and have a better grip on the game?

'In normal classical tournaments I am still going to try and play openings and theoretical lines, trying to get an advantage. Here in London I was playing 1.b3, for example, just to get a game. In rapid, because there are more mistakes, it's a bit easier to play this, it's more intuition than pure calculation, and it works quite well. But in general, certainly in classical chess, that can't be my approach. Here I was playing more positional chess, with the exception of the final against Gelfand. I was especially happy with the game against Jones in which I was White and outplayed him in the middlegame and won the endgame.'

You didn't lose a single game; is that a pleasant feeling?

'For the most part I have been trying to be a bit more solid, to avoid losing. You win fewer games as well. In general, when you play solidly and you lose fewer games, your result will improve, because you certainly get your chances. You're just minimalizing the risk. Take the World Cup, look at Kramnik. Did he lose any games in the World Cup? I don't think he did. Especially in knock-outs and match formats you really have to be solid and not lose games. If you lose games, it puts you in a very difficult situation. In London, obviously, there was the game against Kramnik that I should have lost, but for the most part I felt that I wasn't in that much danger.'

What is happening in the games between you and Kramnik? There is always a lot going on and sometimes he must feel that the game is jinxed when he is playing against you.

'No, I don't think so. One of the problems these days, especially for someone like Kramnik, who is from an older generation, is the level of defence and the level of resistance that people put up. There is a game against Carlsen, last year in London, an English Botvinnik system. Kramnik was simply up a pawn in an endgame and Carlsen drew it very easily. Without really being in any serious danger. I think that's the big difference. When Kramnik has these positions which are much better, he assumes they have to be winning. And technically speaking, they probably are, but the resistance that the younger players, myself, Carlsen, Caruana also, put up is very very different from the past, when it was easier to convert these sorts of advantages. In this game against me Kramnik just couldn't believe that I was defending so well and then he slipped.'

'Kramnik just couldn't believe that I was defending so well and then he slipped.'

Where does this greater resistance and resilience come from?

'It's the influence of computers on the game. The computers have more or less taught us that unless you're completely lost, there always are resources that can be found. Nowadays, the top players, we find almost all these resources. So in a position that is objectively winning it is still difficult, especially for someone like Kramnik. He's been playing for so long, you're kind of expecting to win and your opponent keeps making it so difficult, that can become very frustrating. I guess that's the reason, especially in London in the game that I won against him.'

Does it also make you sharper in positions when you yourself have the advantage? The awareness that you still have to prove something, as there may be a defence for your opponent?

'Yes. I think in general that's the thing for young players like me, Carlsen and others. We are expecting them to find the best moves. That determines our whole approach. We don't get emotional, we just keep focussing on finding the best moves. It's not like we are going to be shocked if someone finds the best defence. It happens. It's not like, OK, this position is a technical win. You know that people keep finding resources and not just lose the game. That's really the difference now, that we are very good at that, just because the computer taught us this.'

Is that a tougher and rougher sort of chess?

'I think it is showing that it's much harder to win games and that the quality of chess is much higher these days for that exact reason. If people are defending so incredibly well all the time, you have to be that much more creative and that much stronger in order to win.'

How do you look back on the past year? What did it bring you and what did it definitely not bring you?

'Certainly the one thing that was missing was that I didn't reach 2800. But all things considered, there have

been a lot of changes going on over the past year. Or rather, since a little more than over a year, since the London Grand Prix, October, November 2012. I stopped working with one of my long-term seconds. Then I went to work with someone else, you know the names obviously (for some reason he is not eager to say their names, but he is referring to his old friend Kris Littlejohn from the United States and Israeli GM Arthur Kogan – DJtG). Then somewhere in July I just decided to go my own way. I really felt like trying to do it on my own. It's been such a long time since I've been doing stuff on my own. I just figured I needed a change. I wasn't quite where I wanted to be. Since then I've taken more responsibility, I am studying much more and I think it has shown in my play.'

DAVID LLADA

Hikaru Nakamura and his girlfriend ('even if it's more than that') Maria at the London Classic. 'It's very good that I am with someone who is very supportive and understands chess.'

Are you entirely working on your own now or are there people you want to keep a secret?
'There are people, but no one who is fairly strong. There are people that I am working with, but for the most part I am very much in charge, I am taking the decisions. I am trusting in myself that I will come to the right conclusions, choose the right openings.'

They serve more as friends to give you feedback, people you feel comfortable with.
'In general, yes, that's correct.'

That was your year. How did you follow the World Championship match? What's your take on that?
'There are many factors in play. In my opinion it is hard to consider it as much of a World Championship match as opposed simply to a transfer of the title. The way Anand played, the way he assessed positions, everything was just not right. Many of his comments, the bad moves he was playing… Anish (Giri) actually pointed this out (in New In Chess 2013/8). It was Game 5, when Anand said 34… ♖d4 was the losing move or was a bad move. And in fact it was a great move. It just seemed that Anand mentally and psychologically wasn't there. Everything just seemed odd, in my opinion. I think it was for a large part about being older, having less motivation and also of being afraid of Carlsen, frankly. It just seemed to me that he never had a chance in the match. Even though initially he was holding on or actually was better, especially in Game 3. His inability in Game 3 to put pressure on Carlsen, really, after that... OK, Carlsen is a great player… I guess when you look at Game 1, 2, especially Game 3, Anand was doing very well, and after that it just all completely turned on him. I think that realistically he never had a chance.'

That's why you say more a transfer of the title than a world championship match…
'That's the way I view it. It's just a different level, really. In general terms he was just so passive throughout the match. I mean, going into these endgames, I don't even know what his strategy was. It just seemed very strange.'

Does this also imply that the elation about Carlsen's achievement is a bit exaggerated? That this enthusiasm might be toned down a bit?
'Well, he is the World Champion. He won the title from Anand, who had defended it several times before. But it didn't feel like he was playing the best player, in many ways. Of course Anand was the World Champion and he had been champion for six years, I believe, but still in a World Championship match you want to see the best players in the world. At the moment I don't think you can put Anand in the same category.'

Suppose you were asked to name three people who might have done a better job?
'For sure Aronian and Kramnik. After that it's anyone's guess. I could say myself, I could say Caruana. But I think the only two for sure are Kramnik and Aronian. Both of them would have done quite a bit better than Anand.'

And as for yourself? Do you feel that you're on your way, but that you're not there yet?

'I think that if I keep playing the way I am playing right now, I'll definitely have my chances. But for the moment it's not really what I am worried about. I simply want to play good chess, gain rating points and win tournaments. That's all I can do. If I can do that, the rest will take care of itself. Obviously there are many people who are unhappy with the format, but that's the way things go.'

You mean people who are unhappy with the fact that you are not in the Candidates'?
'You know, it's not just me. Because you have so many tournaments going on, you have the live ratings, it's fairly ridiculous to not completely depend on the ratings. I feel that rating is the most accurate judgement of the strength of a player. When you look at the ratings in the Top 10, then four players are not in the Candidates' at the moment. I am not in, Caruana is not in, Grischuk is not in, Gelfand is not in either. Four players in the Top-10 who are not in the Candidates' tournament certainly shows that there is a problem with the format.'

Is that something that vexes you? That you were not in London in that great Candidates' tournament and now you are not going to be in the next one either?
'No, let's be fair. I certainly would not say I had a right to play in that one. I certainly don't think I would have had a chance at winning if I had played in London. Things are the way they are. Perhaps if Kasparov wins (the FIDE presidential elections), things may change, then things will get better, but at the moment things are the way they are and I am certainly not in a position to do anything about that, so I am just focussing on playing well.'

One of the things you tweeted during the match in Chennai, which was picked up with enthusiasm by many people, was: 'Starting to realize that I am the only person who is going to be able to stop Sauron in the context of chess history.' You didn't tweet that for nothing, you must have felt, gee, at some point, let me have a go at the guy.
'I do feel that at the moment I am the biggest threat to Carlsen amongst the players who are still around. Obviously, the way chess is there will certainly be many young talents coming up, but at the moment I think I am probably the person who has the best chance. I am not as old as Aronian. Kramnik is still a phenomenal player, but he has to deal with time at this point, he is getting older. I certainly think I am going to have my chance at some point and it's just a matter of when I get that chance I have to make the most of it.'

You mean that at the moment you may not necessarily be the second best player in the world, but you would be able best to deal with the kind of chess Carlsen plays. Is that what you are saying?
'Essentially yes. Once again, it's far off and while I do believe that, to think about that is kind of silly, because the only way I can get there is if I play well and gain rating points and confidence. I very much believe that, but at the same time I have to back it up with results.'

So far you have not been too successful against Carlsen. Did the games you played in St. Louis give you some more confidence? Are you getting a better grip on him?
'In general most games I lost to him were more due to stupidity and nothing objective. In many of the games I've done crazy things in the openings, especially the one in Wijk aan Zee last year, where I just completely went insane in the opening. So I think it's not due to chess ability, it's about losing perspective and objectivity and going crazy at the start for no reason. In St. Louis I avoided doing that. I felt that I played very well. Obviously I lost a number of games. I don't think that I lost because I was necessarily playing that much worse, but due to being provoked into doing crazy things in the opening rather than losing an endgame for example.'

You mean that he had a psychological edge on you and you have figured out what was happening and you can do better.
'OK, from the games I lost against him the only one where I felt I was actually outplayed was in London, two years ago. A Spanish where he sacked the exchange at some point. All the others I lost because I did something completely crazy in the opening. It's a bit strange because everybody talks about Carlsen not having opening preparation and that he is very good in middlegames and endgames, while I have never actually really been outplayed in a middlegame or endgame. Everybody talks about his opening being his weak point, but then when I play him it's in the opening where it is decided.'

But there you are to be blamed yourself.
'Anand said this too. Magnus is also very good at provoking people into making mistakes and doing these things. I mean, it's not all. Obviously he is doing something right because otherwise you wouldn't be able to win so consistently. But I am getting a grip on that and especially in St. Louis I felt that I played quite well.'

The way you composed your new team, is that in any manner inspired by the way Carlsen gathers people around him? Maybe there even aren't any strong players around him except for Jon Ludvig Hammer. Does that play a role?
'No, not really. I'm just doing my own thing. They are people I trust very much. The only thing I'd say, I've played many more games recently in the style that he is known for, especially for team championships. Or the game against Jones in London. But other than perhaps trying to play in this style, trying to be universal, I don't base anything on the way he is doing things.'

NEW IN CHESS

In St. Louis both games against Magnus Carlsen ended in normal draws. 'In many of the games I've done crazy things in the openings, especially the one in Wijk aan Zee last year, where I just completely went insane.'

He is the rival, the one who has to be challenged, but in various aspects he also is an example.

'Yeah, for sure. You see, if in middlegames and endgames he gets his positions, he has a better understanding of what the goal is, where the possible opportunities are. That's what has made players focus much more on middlegames and endgames once again, whereas in the days of Kasparov it was all about opening preparation. And now it's coming sort of full circle, it's about technique and understanding.'

Have you changed your work on the middlegame and the endgame, the way you are approaching it?

'I think nowadays it's a bit different from the past. I am thinking a bit more deeply about some of these things, about what I am trying to aim for. But in general it's just a process of improving and understanding that is getting better.'

So what is the goal for the coming year in concrete terms, rather than just calling it trying to play good chess?

'I want to get to 2800. That's probably the main thing. That's basically about it, getting to 2800 and losing fewer games. Trying to be more solid and not lose.'

And winning big tournaments is something that happens in the process.

'Maybe not even winning tournaments, just avoiding collapses. Especially in Moscow, the way that tournament ended was quite disappointing. If I lose a game here or there, I should not to lose control and ruin the whole tournament.'

At the onset of 2014, do you feel more balanced and more at ease than one year ago?

'Oh, definitely. If you'd asked me one year ago if I could be where I am today I would have been very happy. I feel much more positive in general. Life is good.'

Is that also connected to your private life? How important is it for your chess that you're also happy with your girlfriend?

'OK, I will leave it as girlfriend for the moment, even if it's more than that. I think in general it's very good that I am with someone who is very supportive, someone who understands chess. In the past I was perhaps a bit more rebellious, more out there. Now having something stable in my life is very good. And also my parents come to tournaments a lot, it's very nice to have good people who have supported me along the way all my life to be there. It's just a good feeling, it really is.'

'It's much more difficult for him than for any of us who are trying to challenge him. Once you become World Champion, what is the motivation?'

There are people who say that Magnus will easily rule for the next 10 years. Is that simplistic thinking?

'Yeah, I certainly think it is. Because you look at someone like Fischer, for example. Once he became World Champion he didn't exactly know what to do with himself. What more was there left to accomplish? I think that is really one of the things that sets Kasparov apart from any of the modern champions, that once he became World Champion he didn't lose the motivation. He still kept playing, he still kept winning tournaments. He was number one for 20 years. I think it is certainly a question for Carlsen of motivation, whereas everyone else is just as motivated as ever to beat him, especially now that he is World Champion. So I think it's much more difficult for him than for any of us who are trying to challenge him. Once you become World Champion, what is the motivation?'

He is going to try to get to 2900.

'It's certainly possible, but I think it's not going to be as easy as everyone says. A long time ago, when I was trying to come up in the rankings, I remember a friend of mine said to me: If people are just going to believe the ratings, then why are they playing? You know, there is a reason why we play games. It's not that clear-cut. And while Carlsen is clearly the number one in the world at the moment, there are plenty of us who will be improving and have chances.' ■

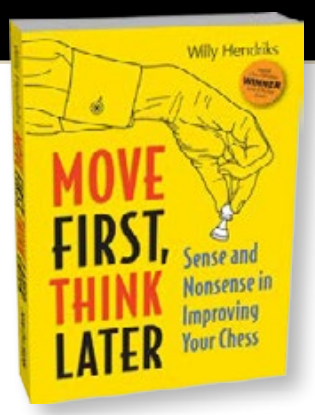
My Most Beautiful Move

Of Turing and Alzheimer tests

In a game played seven years ago, **Willy Hendriks** got very close to making his most beautiful move. Since then he has written about this move on several occasions, but in the recent Hoogeveen Open he caught an opponent unawares and finally managed to execute it on the board. Alas, not to the desired effect, and so instead of a glorious report it inspired him to some gloomy philosophizing about the differences between human and computer thinking and about the aging (chess playing) brain.

When I'd just started playing chess, some 35 years ago, the first chess-playing computers entered the market. I remember a cousin visiting and bringing one along. My cousin could hardly play chess, yet he informed me that these computers played terribly strongly due to the fact that they never made the same mistake twice. This was an amusing delusion, probably extracted out of the sales pitch, since it was in fact very common for those early computers to repeat the same mistakes over and over again. A lot of fun was made of these first attempts of the machine to play chess, but, as we all know, our laughing days have long been over.

The increase of the computer's playing strength is almost completely based on quantity (brute force). Over the history of computing hardware, the computer's capacity or speed has been roughly doubling every two years, as stated or predicted in Moore's law. Over the years, my own calculating abilities haven't shown the same progression. On the contrary, with the age of 50 getting nearer, I have the impression that these abilities are following Moore's graph in the opposite direction. But I don't feel the need for a separate law catching this steady decline into a nice formula bearing my name.



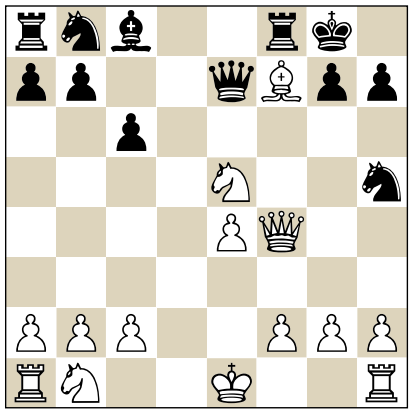
Willy Hendriks is the author of the acclaimed bestseller *Move First Think Later*, which won the 2012 ECF Book of the Year Award.

As an introduction to the story of how I finally managed to play my most beautiful move ever, the preceding might seem somewhat gloomy. But the game in question nicely demonstrated the big differences in human and computer decision-making: the brilliancies in it were the computer's, the mistakes were mine.

I have written about 'my most beautiful move' on several occasions, invariably with the introduction that there are two things a bit regrettable about this move: I didn't think of it myself (Fritz did) and I didn't manage to play it (though I came close). This introduction has to be modified but not to the better: although I finally managed to play the move, I ended up empty-handed.

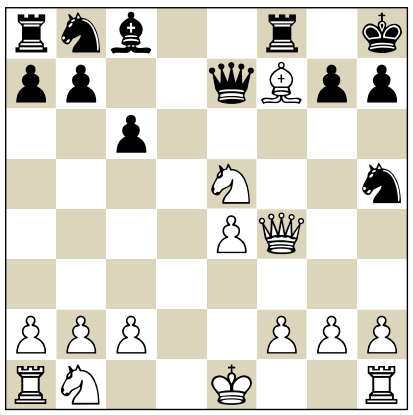
IG 4.16 - C24
Willy Hendriks
Demre Kerigan
Hoogeveen 2013 (6)

1.e4 e5 2.♗c4 ♘f6 3.d3 c6 4.♘f3 d5 5.♗b3 ♗b4+ 6.♗d2 ♗xd2+ 7.♕xd2 dxe4 8.♘xe5 0-0 9.dxe4 ♕e7 10.♕f4 ♘h5 11.♗xf7+



11...♔h8

The critical move. In an earlier game (from 2006), to my regret, my opponent quickly took on f7. After 11...♖xf7 12.♕xf7+ ♕xf7 13.♘xf7 ♔xf7 we got a position with a rook and two pawns against bishop and knight, but without queens. White is slightly better.



Now White's position looks hopeless, as there seems no way to save the knight on e5. But there is a very elegant saving move which I 'discovered' preparing this line some years ago.

12.♕g3!!

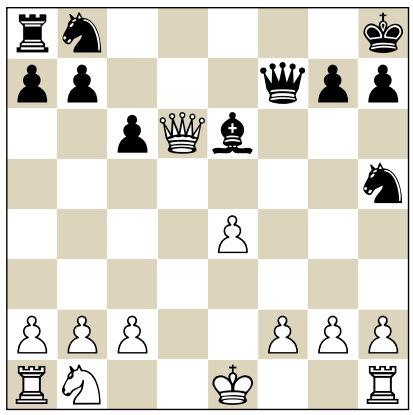
White moves his queen back to a square where it is still under attack without threatening anything special. The point is 12...♘xg3 13.♘g6+! hxg6 14.hxg3+, and mate follows. Please note the study-like symmetry in this line opening.

My opponent did not flinch. Since I had been playing my moves quickly, he probably had the feeling that some justification of White's strange play had to be coming.

12...♖xf7 There is nothing better than this. On 12...g6, threatening to take the queen, White has 13.♕c3!.

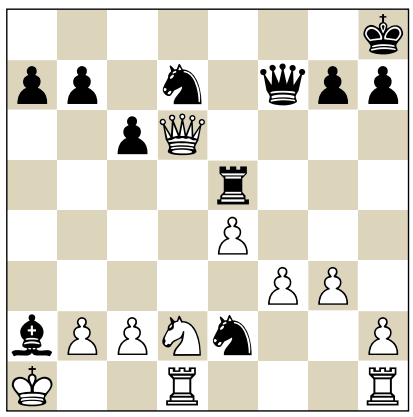
13.♘xf7+ ♕xf7 14.♕d6 ♗e6

With a rook and two pawns against bishop and knight White is slightly better. Trading queens with 15.♕d8+ as well as keeping them on with 15.♘c3 are decent options.



> 'Like the ancient Delphian priests assisted the Pythia, today's GMs interpret the oracle's verdicts and explain them to ordinary people.'

15.♘d2?! ♘d7 16.0-0-0 ♖e8 17.f3 ♘f4!? 18.g3 ♘e2+ 19.♔b1 ♗xa2+!? 20.♔a1 ♖e5

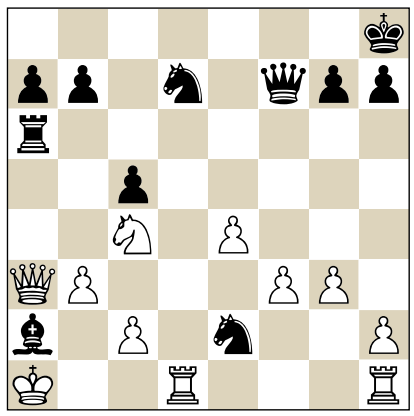


Black has played in enterprising style and won back one pawn, but most of his pieces are in a vulnerable position. Now White could have defended against the threat ...♖a5 with 21.♕a3 b6 22.♘b3!, and he is doing fine.

21.b3? ♖e6!

After 21...♖a5? White simply plays 22.♔b2, but I had missed this retreat. White's position collapses in view of the possibility of ♕f6.

22.♕a3 c5 23.♘c4 ♖a6



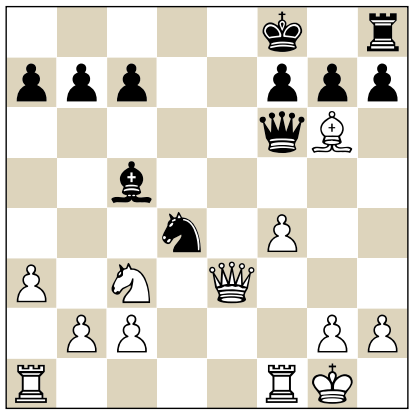
A cruel echo of the clearance of the h-file White intended with 12.♕g3: he goes down on the rook file on the other side of the board. After a few more moves White had to resign.

My opponent clearly had not read my book *Move First, Think Later*, in which this ♕g3 move has a prominent place. But taking into account the outcome of this game, I had to withdraw from making a glorious remark about what happens if you don't read my book. Instead I could only congratulate him on his fine play and leave the tournament hall with a slight feeling of clumsiness. But when your most beautiful move only guarantees a slight advantage, there is the risk of not winning, of course.

Up to 12.♕g3 I just played my moves nearly a tempo, not trying some cheap trickery. To trick someone into a move like 12...♘xg3? is hardly possible, unless your opponent completely lacks any sense of suspicion. 'The man has gone mad, let's take the queen without further ado.' I have to admit, though, that when I first saw 12.♕g3 a few years ago, that was exactly my

initial impression looking at Fritz' display: the machine has finally gone mad.

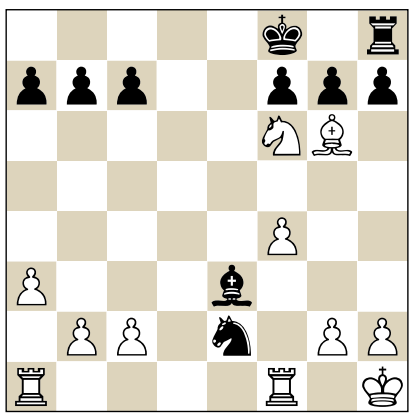
Incidentally, in a rapid game a year ago, the Russian grandmaster Ivan Popov did fall for a remarkably similar trick.



Ivan Popov - Daniele Vocaturo
St.Petersburg rapid 2012

White is a rook up and can give some material back. For example, 18.♕h3! ♘f5+ 19.♔h1 fxg6 20.♘e4 would be easily winning, as indicated by Alex Baburin in *Chess Today*. But White understandably wanted to get rid of the enemy bishop at once.

18.♘e4? ♘e2+! 19.♔h1 ♗xe3 20.♘xf6



20...♘g3+! 0-1

A move like 'my' 12.♕g3 is clearly a product of the machine. Presented as a puzzle it is solvable, although several really strong players had to rack their brains over it (on the other hand, Dutch master Manuel Bosboom claims he solved it in 1.5 seconds). But the whole line has to be foreseen when you decide upon 9.dxe4, which I guess falls beyond the reach of all humans.

Detecting the nature of the origin of a move (human or electronic) has become very topical because of the cheating issue. A parallel can be drawn with the Turing test. The famous English mathematician Alan Turing thought up this experiment to answer the question of whether a machine can be called intelligent. In a Turing test, essentially, the answer is positive if the machine manages to give a human observer the impression he is dealing with another human (for example in a conversation).

Turing wrote about this in 1950 and at that time it was almost unthinkable that a computer could get anywhere near to complex human thinking. But in the Artificial Intelligence struggle, chess was one of the first domains in which the human has been surpassed. So now we are in the paradoxical situation that to appear human in chess, the machine has to play not above but way below its capacities. And if we want to detect cheaters in chess (humans that actually play computer moves) we have to use the computer to help us determine this fact. The computer helping the human in a Turing test: this parallel is quickly going awry.

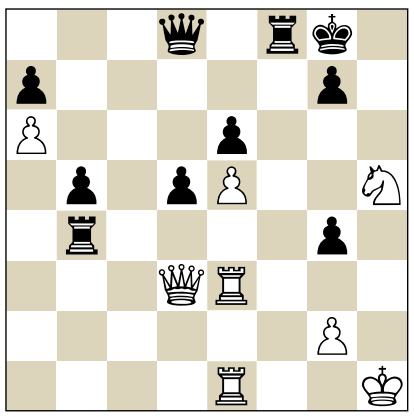
Some people fear that cheating in chess will become more sophisticated along the lines sketched above by mixing some human elements into the machine's decisions. For those with an inclination to paranoia this is a true horror scenario. And indeed, there already have been quite a few instances of unjustified accusations. During a game it is really discouraging if you think your opponent is using computer assistance. Those who regularly play on the Internet will recognize this: as soon as you get suspicious, your case is lost, no matter if your suspicion is justified or not. In psychological warfare, arousing the suspicion of computer assistance is a really powerful placebo mechanism, much stronger than what we can encounter in the medical world. So if you have a move like 12.♕g3 available, you are well advised to behave in a nervous and suspicious manner before executing it.

To put the chess-playing computer to a tougher Turing test, one can think of several possibilities. For example, to let it address the aesthetic aspect in chess, or let it make an interesting (from the human perspective) analysis of a game completely on its own. The first experiment with this in NIC wasn't successful, since the content of one issue wasn't sufficient for the machine to comment on only one single move.

So there is still a task left for the human elite players: editing and commenting on the machine's findings. Like the ancient Delphian priests assisted the Pythia, today's grandmasters interpret the oracle's verdicts and explain them to ordinary people.

Regarding the aesthetic aspect, the computer is still in its infancy. It does not yet have an indicator light that brightens up as soon as, somewhere in the middle of millions of lines, something beautiful passes by. So here also there still exists a task for the human: to spot the beauty in the lines of the machine.

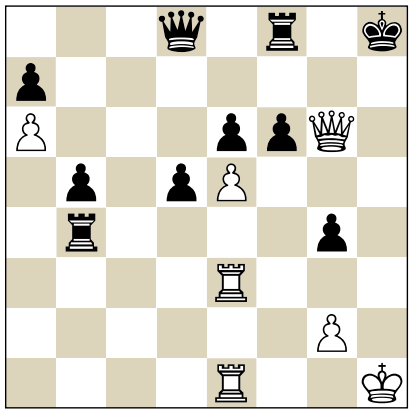
My most beautiful move is a nice example of this, but I'd like to present to you another one, also on the theme of line-opening.



Willy Hendriks - Jeroen Bosch
Second Bundesliga 2007

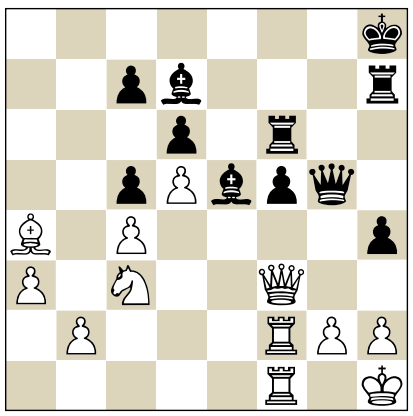
In the game I played **37.♕g6** but after **37...♕h4+** White still had to

clear some hurdles to convert his extra piece into a full point. So it would come in very handy if 37.♘f6+ gxf6 38.♕g6+ ♔h8 would yield a winning attack.

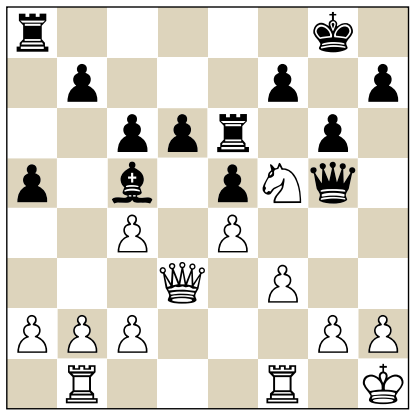


1. I give this as a puzzle to you, since trying to solve it is the best way to really enjoy the solution. One small hint: a week later, while waiting for the start of a rapid tournament, I showed this position to Jan Timman and Yochanan Afek, asking if they thought a win was available. They couldn't find one, but as soon as I addressed them as study composers they spotted the winning move.

2. This is a very tough puzzle, so I'll continue with some light food. In the period of writing this article, I participated in the traditional Christmas tournament in Groningen. I was browsing through my collection of line-opening puzzles for my article and thought about including the next couple.



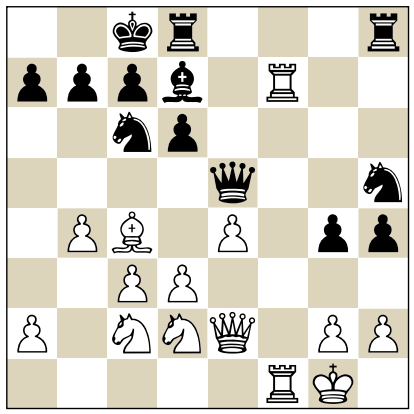
NN - WH
Internet Chess Club 2011
Black to move



Piotr Delekta - Efim Geller
Cappelle-la-Grande 1992

3. Actually this is a double puzzle. White played **18.♘g3?**
Can you spot Black's nice refutation? Secondly, though White's position looks hopeless, he has a move that keeps him in the game, elegantly making use of the line-opening idea as well.

I didn't play very well in Groningen, but one moment from my game in the sixth round in particular gave me food for thought.



Willy Hendriks - Roeland Pruijssers
Groningen 2013

4. With an untimely b2-b4 a few moves ago I had spoiled a nice position and things had already gotten a bit out of control. I was looking at the consequences of the expected 18...♕xc3, but my thoughts got rudely interrupted by Black's next move. By now you probably can guess which move (in about, say, 1.5 seconds).

If you are writing an article about the line-opening motif, looking at examples like the ones shown above and not seeing a move like this coming, well, that is not a good sign. Instead of worrying about all kinds of Turing tests I'm probably better advised to pay a visit to the geriatrician for a different type of tests.

Lately I have been exploring the literature on aging and on the aging brain. I didn't start with those in the 'opportunities and challenges' genre, but with a book with the telling title Bad news for everybody ('Slecht nieuws voor iedereen'), by Dutch columnist Emma Brunt. Just in case you were wondering about the slightly sombre tone of this article.

The perspective of the book is that of the typical problems of an aging woman, which of course are quite different from the aging chess player's problems. But I admire her main weapon in this struggle that has only one possible outcome: merciless humour.

So it seems appropriate to end with a few words of consolation for the aging chess player, taken from this book about the aging process: 'The beginning is difficult, but after that it goes rapidly downhill.' ■

Solutions

1. White should try to make the line-opening tactic with ♖h3 work, but the immediate 39.♖h3+ is not winning after 39...gxh3, as now after both 40.gxh3 ♖h4 and 40.♕h5+ ♔g7 41.gxh3 f5 (or 41...♖f7 42.♖g1+ ♔f8) 42.♖g1+ ♖g4 43.hxg4 f4 Black is winning.
If it was a study, only one move could be considered: the beautiful quiet move 39.♖g1!!, preparing 40.♖h3+, leaves Black without a defence.
2. Forcing the opening of the h-file with 31...♕g3! won the game for Black.
3. After 18.♘g3? Black struck with 18...♕xg3!, and White resigned in view of 19.hxg3 g5!, and mate follows. White could have saved himself with 18.g4!. On the other hand, 18.h4? offers no relief because of 18...♕d8.
4. 18...♘g3!, winning the exchange, since White cannot allow the h-file to be opened. ■

Fun Games in Beijing

For various chess professionals, the SportAccord Mind Games in Beijing have become a popular destination in the days leading up to Christmas. Playing rapid and blitz combined with some sightseeing (or watching the Champions' league on TV) is not the worst way to prepare for the holiday season. This time the blindfold chess had been replaced by a 'Basque' tournament and that was fun, too. **Maxime Vachier-Lagrave** reports from China, where he miraculously arrived one day ahead of schedule.

December 9th, in the morning, at home. Tonight I am supposed to fly to Beijing for the World Mind Games. The only slight inconvenience is that I don't know it yet. When looking at my plane ticket I mostly noticed the '10DEC' in the first line, which was the date of arrival in China, where it's seven hours later than in France. Casually checking Twitter, I notice a tweet by Anish Giri, who says that he is leaving for the World Mind Games today, which makes me a bit suspicious. I know some players are already leaving on the 9th, but as the event only starts on the 12th, there is no reason to worry... yet. I quietly recheck my ticket, and once again see '10DEC'. Everything is fine. And then my eyes are finally drawn to the line that indicates the moment of departure, and there it is: 'MO09DEC'! While wondering how I could have missed this in the first place, I realize to my relief that I am not in any time-trouble at all; there's still time enough to get to the airport in time. Also on the 9th. What's more, to my delight I realize that this early departure will give me the opportunity to watch the matches of the Champions' League both on Tuesday and Wednesday instead of being airborne somewhere on Tuesday night. Of course, given the time difference I will be watching these matches at 3.45 am, but based on the experience of my previous trips to China and Japan, I am confident that I will be fully awake around that time. And, indeed, the jetlag didn't let me down and there I was, watching the match, which ironically enough was Galatasaray-Juventus, which was stopped due to excessive snow after half an hour – much to the dis-

Peter Leko, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Anish Giri and Levon Aronian are ready for some fun at the Mind Games.

GALIYA KAMALOVA

What better place for Anish Giri, Sergey Karjakin and Ruslan Ponomariov to bask in the Chinese sun than on top of the Chinese Wall?

appointment of soccer lovers all over China, including me. As usual the jetlag also claimed other victims, so China was witness to the extremely rare sight of Sasha Grischuk and myself meeting for the breakfast buffet at seven in the morning!

Let's move on to the World Mind Games, which has become an annual meeting held in Beijing by the SportAccord company. It features five different Mind Games: bridge, chess, draughts, go and xiangqi, also known as Chinese chess. After a beautiful opening ceremony the action started with a total of 32 chess players – 16 women and 16 men. There were three tournaments. First there were seven rapid games to be played in two days (20 minutes with an additional 10 seconds per move), next there was a double round-robin of 30 blitz games (3 minutes plus 2 seconds per move) which took three days, and finally there was a new experiment. Instead of the blindfold of the previous years, FIDE introduced a Basque tournament, which is essentially playing two games simultaneously against the same opponent. In this case five rounds of 10 games with the rapid time-control. Most players had never tried this interesting idea, which aims at eliminating the advantage of the white pieces in a match. In general the experiment was welcomed by the players – admittedly partly because blindfold games are very tiring for those who do not like the increased probability of blundering pieces in one move – although some questions were raised. After all, you want to avoid anything that isn't covered by the rules but still shouldn't happen. For instance, it was decided that you could play two moves on both boards at the same time using both hands, but that you couldn't play a move while standing up. It was also decided that game points would be used for scoring instead of match points, even though in my opinion a combination of match points and game points as the first tiebreaker would have been a more inspired choice. But in general the games went very smoothly for an experiment and it contributed to the fun of the players, who tend to enjoy their stay in China a lot. Indeed, despite the intensely competitive atmosphere that none of us escapes from, we did have some time left for sightseeing. Hard-core game lovers could even follow the action in

'China was witness to the extremely rare sight of Sasha Grischuk and myself meeting for the breakfast buffet at seven in the morning!'

Travel organizer:

Ecoresort Le Sirenè
73014 Gallipoli - Salento - Italy
Phone: +39 0833 202536
Fax: +39 0833 202539
e mail: centroprenotazioni@attiliocaroli.it
web site: www.attiliocaroli.it

Event organizer:

Chess Projects ASD
20149 Milano Via Marghera, 47
info@chesspro.it - www.chesspro.it
www.3salentochessopen2014.it
Mobile +39 335 6948385 - Tel. 02 84934382

Tournament: Open A, Open B, Rapid, Blitz,
Open A: players ELO FIDE rating >= 1800
Open B: players con ELO FIDE rating from 0 to < = 2000
Prize fund: € 5.600,00
Invitations: 10 titled players GM, WGM, IM, WIM
Evening open chess lectures managed by GM, WGM, IM, WIM
Football and tennis matches, poker "texas hold'em" night tournaments, daily sightseeing of most entertaining and historical Salento sites, Gallipoli, Otranto, Lecce, S. Maria di Leuca
Accomodation at Ecoresort Le Sirené by full board prizes for night/person: € 65

the other Mind Games (or watch the Champion's League, whichever you deemed more interesting), as there is virtually no opening preparation needed during the event.

Last year's winner of the rapid tournament was my compatriot Laurent Fressinet. Sadly, I did not even come close to repeating his success, as I spent the entire tournament in the lower regions of the table. To be honest, in such tournaments a good start is almost mandatory, as the strength of your opponents is not going to vary much and you will have a lot of tough games anyway. That is why I was not at all happy with my first game against Peter Leko, who didn't give me any real chances with his consistent play all through the game.

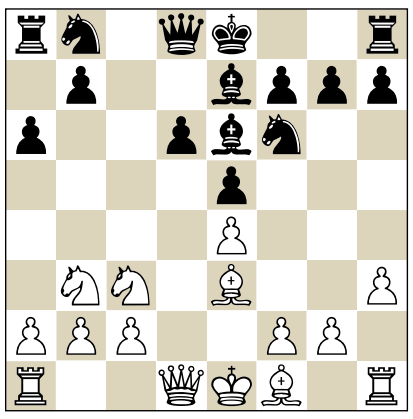
You don't need to be an expert to see who won the rapid game between Peter Leko and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave in the first round.

Sl 14.8 – B90
Peter Leko
Maxime Vachier-Lagrave
Beijing rapid 2013 2013 (1)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e3 e5

In the Basque game against Peter I deviated with 6...♘g4 7.♗c1 ♘f6 8.h3, when Peter was hoping for 8...e5 (8...♘c6 was actually my choice) 9.♘b3 ♗e7 10.♗e3, and we are back in the game. Such finesses are generally a lot of fun to notice, especially in rapid games.

7.♘b3 ♗e7 8.h3 ♗e6



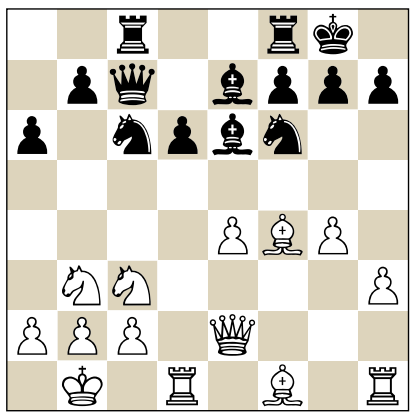
9.f4

This idea gained a lot of popularity recently. It might look quite innocuous at first sight, but if Black doesn't get in ...d5 and plays too casually, he generally won't get the counterplay he is striving for. This is exactly what happened to me in the game.

9...exf4 10.♗xf4 ♘c6 11.♕e2 0-0

Here 11...♘d7 12.0-0-0 ♘ce5 13.♘d4 ♖c8 14.♕e3 0-0 wins some time in the development of Black's counter-attack compared to the game. During the game I thought I might as well wait for White to play g4-g5 and not allow an additional plan with 15.♘f5.

12.0-0-0 ♕c7 13.g4 ♖ac8 14.♔b1



14...♖fe8

An inaccuracy, as I had misjudged White's plan, which I thought involved ♘d5 at some point.

15.g5 ♘d7 16.h4 ♘ce5 17.♕g2

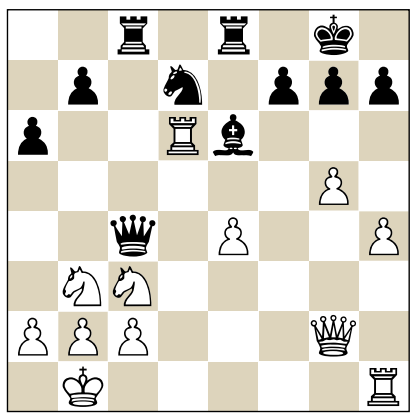
17.♗h3 ♘c4 18.♘d5 was also good.

17...♘c4

After 17...b5 18.h5 ♘b6 19.♘d4 b4 20.♘d5 ♘xd5 21.exd5 ♗g4 22.♖e1 it is obvious that Black's attack has not even started, whereas White is on the verge of breaking through, for instance: 22...♗d7 23.♗xe5!? dxe5 24.♗d3! exd4 25.♕e4 g6 26.hxg6 fxg6 27.♖xh7, and wins.

18.♗xc4 ♕xc4 19.♗xd6 ♗xd6 20.♖xd6

I was not at all aiming for this position obviously, but I still thought that somehow I could hope to survive. My next move is very bad in that respect.

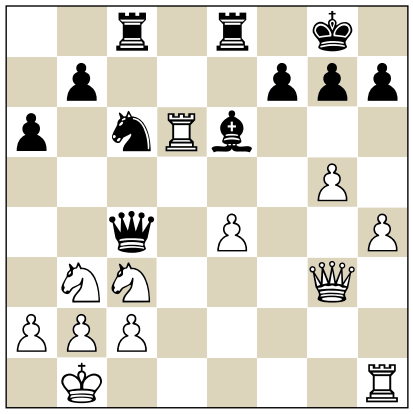


20...♘e5

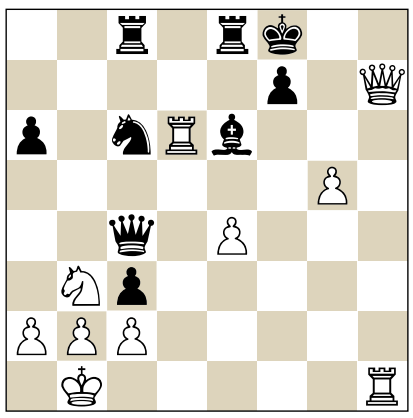
20...♕c7 21.♖hd1 ♘e5 22.♘d5! didn't appeal to me, and indeed Black is much worse. But it was still the best.

21.♕g3 ♘c6

After 21...♕c7 22.♕xe5 ♗xb3 was my idea, but 23.♕d4 ♗e6 24.h5 forces me to exchange queens with a lost endgame. I felt that Peter would try to exchange queens himself, so I decided not to make this task too easy.



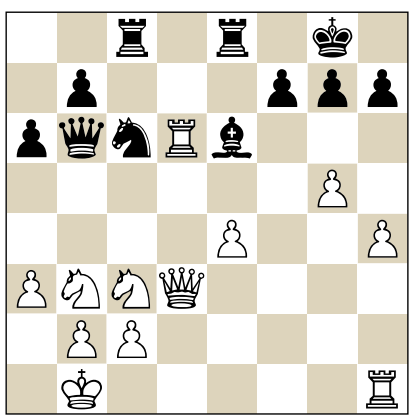
22.♕d3?! And indeed he goes for it. 22.h5 was actually curtains, but Peter saw this forced line: 22...b5 23.h6 b4 24.hxg7 bxc3 25.♕h4 ♔xg7 26.♕xh7+ ♔f8, and as he told me after the game, he couldn't find a mate.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

After a few seconds of bewilderment I uncorked the powerful 27.♖d7! ♗xd7 28.♕h8+ ♔e7 29.♕f6+ ♔f8 30.♖h8 mate.

22...♕b4 23.a3 ♕b6



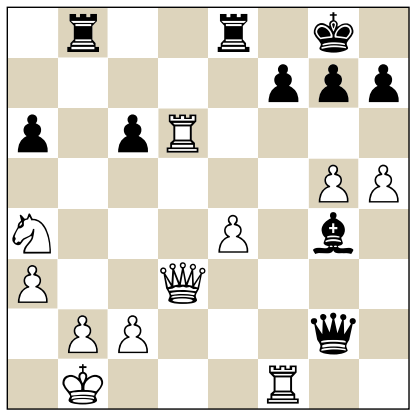
24.♘d4!

I had missed this move, which makes my position very difficult again.

24...♖cd8 25.♘xc6 bxc6 26.♖d1?!

The automatic move, but very far from the best one, as I finally get my counterplay. Best was 26.♘a4!.

26...♖b8 27.♘a4 ♕f2 28.h5 ♗g4 29.♖f1 ♕g2!



30.♘c3?!

Here I regained some confidence, as the position gets really complicated. Neither of us was convinced by the following line: 30.g6 fxg6 31.♕c4+ ♔h8 32.h6!. I saw all this, but misjudged the following position: 32...♖f8 (32...gxh6 33.♖f7! ♕xe4 34.♖f8+, and wins) 33.hxg7+ ♔xg7 34.♖c1!, and Black is lost. The difference with the game is that my king is too exposed to try to push my pawns.

30...♗xh5 31.♖xc6 ♕xg5 32.♕xa6 ♗g6

My position is still difficult, but it could get very double-edged in the next few moves. As I was already very short on time, I started making bad decisions again.

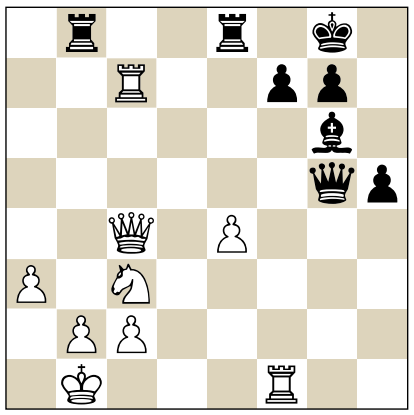
33.♕c4 h5 34.♖c7

Beijing rapid 2013

1	Wang Yue	IGM	CHN	2729	5
2	Peter Leko	IGM	HUN	2738	5
3	Alexander Grischuk	IGM	RUS	2828	4½
4	Leinier Dominguez	IGM	CUB	2758	4½
5	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	IGM	AZE	2795	4
6	Ian Nepomniachtchi	IGM	RUS	2799	4
7	Wang Hao	IGM	CHN	2690	4
8	Sergey Karjakin	IGM	RUS	2787	3½
9	Teimour Radjabov	IGM	AZE	2749	3½
10	Ruslan Ponomariov	IGM	UKR	2748	3
11	Maxime Vachier-Lagrave	IGM	FRA	2761	3
12	Gata Kamsky	IGM	USA	2734	3
13	Vassily Ivanchuk	IGM	UKR	2732	3
14	Levon Aronian	IGM	ARM	2797	2½
15	Le Quang Liem	IGM	VIE	2756	2
16	Anish Giri	IGM	NED	2700	1½

16 players, 7 rounds

Peter got his composure back and played excellent moves here.

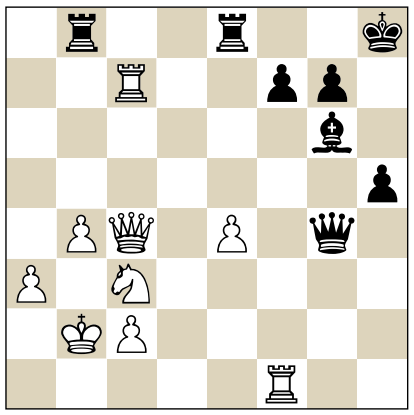


34...♔h8?!

34...♔h7 was better, but to be honest I didn't know which square to choose and decided it was a coin flip.

35.b4 ♕g4 36.♔b2!

Very safe, in true Peter style!



36...♖bd8

Another bad choice, but for some reason I thought I could develop an initiative against White's king in the few seconds left on the clock.

37.b5 h4 38.b6 h3 39.b7 ♔h7

39...h2 was Black's last hope, but after 40.♖h1 ♕g2 41.♕f1 ♕g3 42.e5! ♕xe5 43.♕h3+ ♔g8 44.♕xh2 he is lost anyway.

40.♕c5

40.♖h1 was even simpler, but 40.♕c5 is still an excellent move in time-trouble, as this square is perfect for the queen!

40...♖d2 Desperation. On 40...♕g2, 41.♕f2 was the point.

41.♖c8 ♖dd8 42.♖xd8 ♖xd8 43.♕c7 Black resigned.

Very consistent play by Peter, which he maintained throughout most of the rapid tournament.

Never missing an opportunity to play for the initiative in every game, Wang Yue won the rapid tournament.

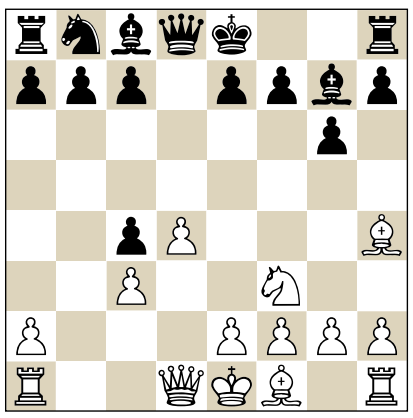
I was in good company, as Levon Aronian and Shakhriyar Mamedyarov lost as well. Wang Yue started well against Ruslan Ponomariov in a game in which he had the initiative from the start, didn't let it go and exploited Pono's inaccuracies.

GI 8.6 – D91
Wang Yue
Ruslan Ponomariov
Beijing rapid 2013 (1)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♗g5 ♗g7 5.♘f3

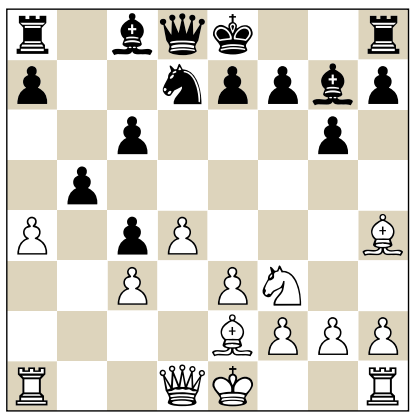
The typical reaction these days, with the idea of 5.♗xf6 ♗xf6 6.cxd5 c5. Recent games have seen Black very much holding his own, as he gets one of the pawns back and gets some decent counterplay with his bishop pair.

5...♘e4 6.♗h4 ♘xc3 7.bxc3 dxc4



8.e3 Maybe not the best version for White of this typical pawn sacrifice, but he retains an enduring initiative, which means a lot in rapid play, even between top players.

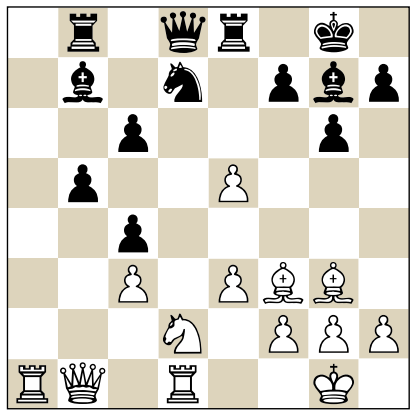
8...b5 9.♗e2 ♘d7 10.a4 c6



11.♘d2! A typical idea, intimately connected with the next few moves.

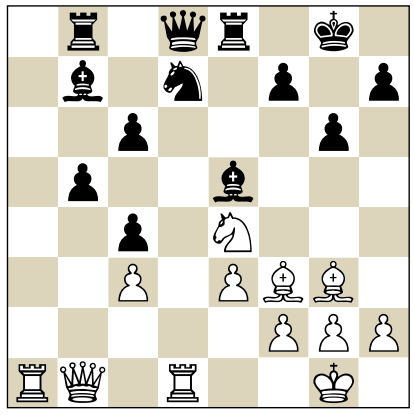
11...a6 12.♗f3 ♗b7 13.0-0 0-0 14.♕b1 White builds up a lot of pressure on the queenside, as he should do, and now Black's task is anything but easy, even though objectively he should be fine. **14...♖b8 15.axb5 axb5 16.♖d1 ♖e8 17.♗g3 e5** An interesting reply, but I believe 17...♖a8 was a safer option.

18.dxe5



18...♗xe5?! A mistake, though to be honest the calculations involved were quite difficult to see all the way to the end. 18...♘xe5! was called for, hoping to more or less equalize after 19.♘xc4 ♕c7 20.♘xe5 ♗xe5 21.♖a7 ♗xg3 22.hxg3 ♕b6 23.♕a2 ♖ed8!, and although White still has some pressure on the queenside, it will most likely end in a draw, as a lot of pieces are already off the board.

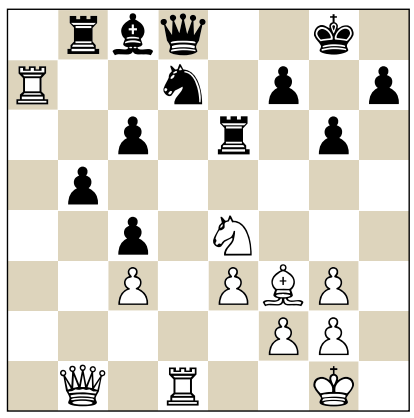
19.♘e4



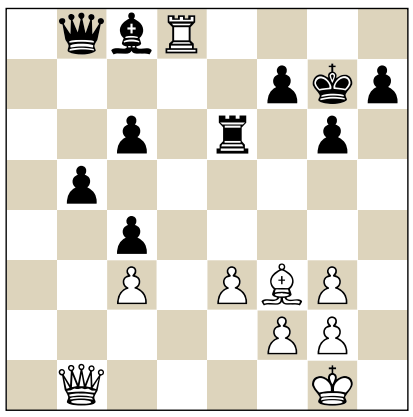
19...♗c8?

19...♔g7! was the scary but only defence, and after 20.♘c5 ♘xc5 21.♗xe5+ ♖xe5 22.♖xd8 ♖xd8 White is better, but I believe Black's coordination is not bad at all.

20.♖a7! ♗xg3 21.hxg3 ♖e6



22.♘c5! Very precise calculation by the Chinese player. **22...♕b6 23.♘xd7 ♕xa7 24.♘xb8 ♕xb8 25.♖d8+ ♔g7**

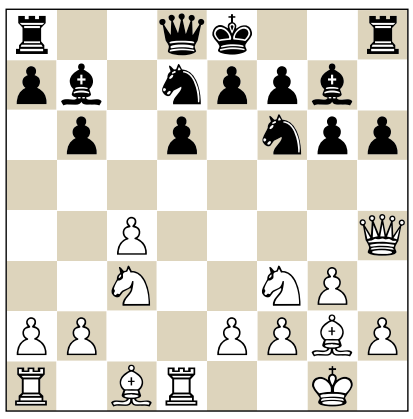


26.♕b4! The point. Not only does Black lose his bishop on c8, his king also comes under a critical attack.
26...♔f6 27.♕f8
Black resigned.
Another illustration of how important it is to call the shots in a rapid game. The Chinese player never missed an opportunity to play for the initiative in every game, which was the main reason for his success.

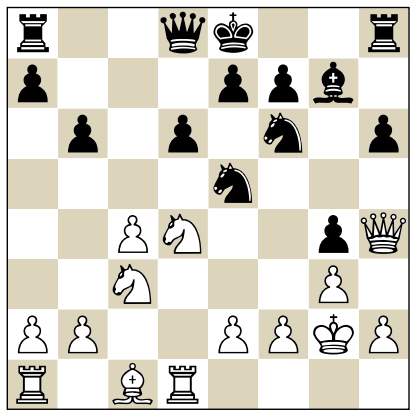
Sergey Karjakin was off to a great start with three wins in the first three games, including this short one against Wang Yue.

EO 40.9 – A49
Wang Yue
Sergey Karjakin
Beijing rapid 2013 (3)

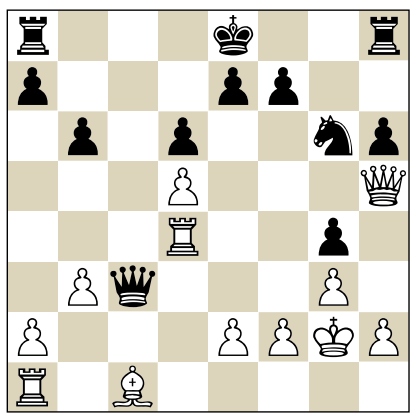
1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 b6 3.g3 c5 4.♗g2 ♗b7 5.0-0 g6 6.d4 cxd4 7.♕xd4 ♗g7 8.♕h4 h6 9.♘c3 d6 10.♖d1 ♘bd7



11.♘d4?! A not very obvious tactical mistake. 11.♗e3 ♖c8 12.b3 should be fine for White.
11...♗xg2 12.♔xg2 g5! 13.♕h3 g4 14.♕h4 ♘e5!
The queen is dramatically lacking space, but Wang Yue was probably pinning his hopes on the following move.



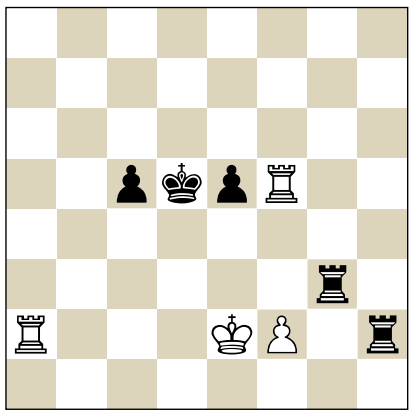
15.♘d5 ♕c8!
This wins a pawn, as White's next move loses by force.
16.b3?
White would still have had some compensation for the pawn after 16.♘xf6+ ♗xf6 17.♕h5 ♕xc4 18.♔g1.
16...♘xd5 17.cxd5 ♘g6 18.♕h5 ♗xd4! 19.♖xd4 ♕c3



And Black wins a full rook. Excellent calculation by Karjakin.
20.♖c4 ♕xa1 21.♕xg4 ♔f8 22.♖c2 h5 23.♕d7 h4 24.♗b2 h3+ 25.♔f3 ♕xb2 White resigned.

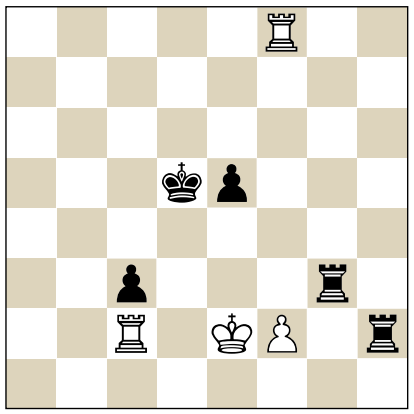
But in the last game of the day, Karjakin lost with white to Leko, who took the sole lead. On the second day, Karjakin collapsed with only half a point out of the last three games, showing how tough an event this is. However, he fought back with a vengeance in the next tournaments.

Leko kept his cool and was a full point ahead before the last round, where he was white against Wang Yue. He managed to defend a difficult position quite successfully until this double rook endgame.

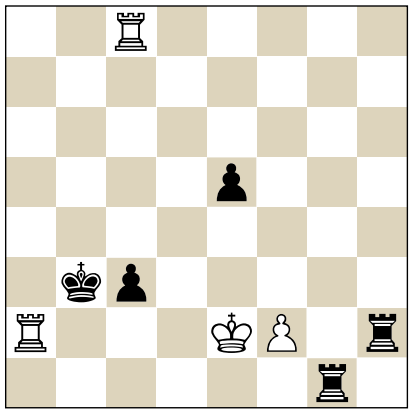


Leko-Wang Yue
position after 49...♖xg3
Beijing rapid 2013 (7)

50.♖f8 c4 51.♖c2
Here 51.♖d2+ ♔e4 52.♔d1 ♖d3 53.♔c2 was maybe the simplest way to a draw, getting the king on a more favourable square to defend against the passed pawn.
51...c3



52.♖c8
Best was 52.♖a2! ♔c4 53.♖a7. This defence might feel unnatural, especially with little time on the clock, but Black's king can't get through and the draw is easy thanks to the ♖h2, which is helping to keep the black king out of unpleasant checks: 53...♔b3 54.♖b8+ ♔c2 55.♖a2+ draw.
52...♔d4 53.♖d8+ ♔c4 54.♖a2 ♖g1 55.♖c8+ ♔b3?



56.♖ca8 With 56.♖a5! White was still in the drawing zone, as Black's rooks are still not doing enough in terms of covering the black king, and after 56...♖h4 57.♖xe5 ♖d4 58.♖ec5 ♖d2+ 59.♔e3 ♖e1+ 60.♔f3 ♖d3+ 61.♔g4 Black keeps some initiative, but he will lose too much time queening the pawn, giving White enough time to advance the f-pawn.

56...♖b1!

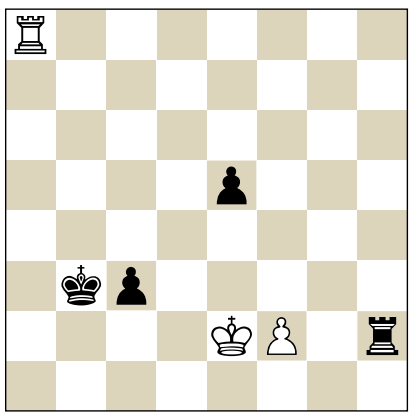
And Wang Yue doesn't let this golden opportunity pass.

57.♖8a3+ Black wins after 57.♖2a5 ♖b2+ 58.♔e3 ♖h1!.

57...♔c4 58.♖a4+ ♖b4 59.♖xb4+ ♔xb4 60.♖a8

60.♔d1 is met by 60...♔b3.

60...♔b3



And White is not in time with his king, so the endgame is lost.

61.♔d3 ♖h3+ 62.♔e4 c2 63.♖b8+ ♔a2 64.♖c8 ♔b2

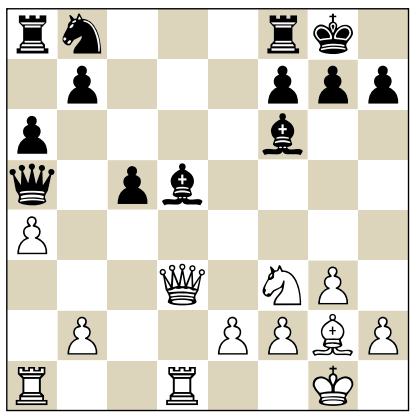
White resigned.

Of course Peter must have been quite upset to miss those opportunities to draw and win the tournament outright, but it can easily happen under pressure, both caused by time and by the tournament situation.

Sergey Karjakin and his girlfriend Galiya. The Russian GM had by far the best combined result in the 2013 Mind Games.

And so, thanks to this last-minute drama, Wang Yue clinched the gold medal thanks to his individual result against Leko, while Sasha Grischuk got the bronze medal on the basis of a better tiebreaker than Leinier Dominguez.

One of the nice things about the World Mind Games is that if you mess up in one tournament you can start afresh in the next one. The blitz tournament was a very close race, which didn't seem to unfold on the first day, when Aronian got off to that fresh start I was talking about and collected an impressive 8½ points, with his only loss – in hindsight a crucial one – to Karjakin.

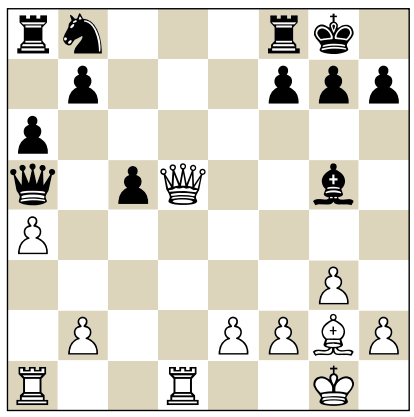


Aronian-Karjakin
position after 18...♗xd5
Beijing blitz 2013 (6)

19.♘g5! A very nice tactic. Levon really seemed to be in good form on the first day.

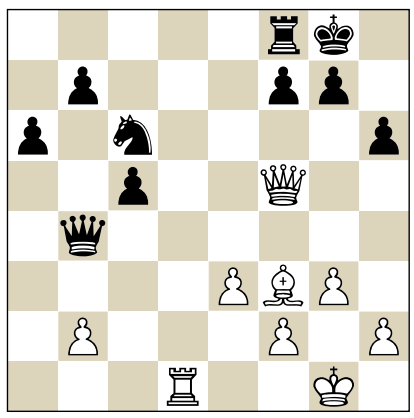
19...♗xg5 Instead, 19...g6 20.♕xd5 ♘c6 might have been the best reply.

20.♕xd5



20...♘c6 After 20...♗f6 21.♕xb7 ♘c6 22.♕xc6 White definitely has a pull.

21.♕xg5 h6 22.♕f5 ♖ad8 23.e3 ♖xd1+ 24.♖xd1 ♕xa4 25.♗f3 ♕b4



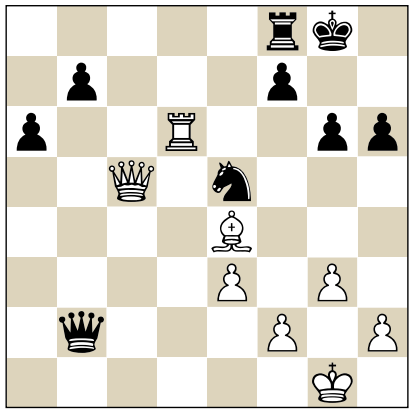
26.♖d6

In blitz 26.♖d6 looks very tempting, but 26.♖d7 was a better move:

26...♕xb2 27.♗e4 g6 28.♕xc5 with a slight pull.

26...♕xb2 27.♗e4 g6 28.♕xc5 ♘e5?!

28...♖d8! 29.♖xd8+ ♘xd8 30.♕d6 ♘c6, and Black manages to equalize.



29.f4??

A typical blitz mistake, I suppose Levon simply didn't notice that the square on g4 was available.

He should have chosen 29.♖b6 ♕a1+ 30.♖b1 ♘f3+ 31.♔g2 ♕e5 32.♕d5! ♕xd5 33.♗xd5 ♘e5 34.♖xb7, and in hindsight this could have changed the name of the tournament winner – even though so early in the tournament it is, of course, a bit far-fetched to reach such a conclusion.

29...♘g4 30.♕c2 ♕xc2 31.♗xc2 ♘xe3 32.♗b3 ♔g7 33.♖b6 ♖b8 34.♔f2?!

He might have tried 34.♖d6!.

34...♘g4+ 35.♔g2 ♘f6 36.♗c4 ♘d7 37.♖d6 ♘c5 38.g4 b5 39.♗d5 b4 40.♖c6 ♘d3 41.♗b3 ♘xf4+ 42.♔g3 ♘e2+

White resigned.

On the second day, Aronian scored a disappointing 4½ points, handing over the lead to Mamedyarov. Now the race definitely had become very close, as before the last day five players were within 1½ points of each other: Mamedyarov with 14 points, followed by Aronian and Karjakin with 13 points, followed by Nepomniachtchi and myself with 12½ points.

On the last day it was Mamedyarov's turn to collapse, gathering only four points from 10 games. With a good finish Aronian and Karjakin shared first place with 19½ points, Karjakin clinching the gold due to the result in their direct encounters. I myself shared third with Mamedyarov and got the bronze thanks to the same tie-breaker. To be honest, the rhythm of play felt pretty tough, as we played all games with almost no pause, except for a short break every five games. Every day was wrapped up in approximately two hours, which was nice for other reasons, but made every playing session very intense, as we had to start a new game while barely recovered (if at all) from the emotions of the last one.

I also have to admit that, as the games were finishing, a lot of players, including myself, would gather around the screens to see what was going on (including some serious talk

DON'T BLUNDER WITH YOUR EDUCATION.
PLAY CHESS HERE.

UT DALLAS

If you're interested in playing chess at an American university, we want to hear from you. The University of Texas at Dallas offers highly competitive scholarships to master-level players. For more information, please contact Program Director Jim Stallings at james.stallings@utdallas.edu one year in advance of your intended fall enrollment date.

utdallas.edu/chess

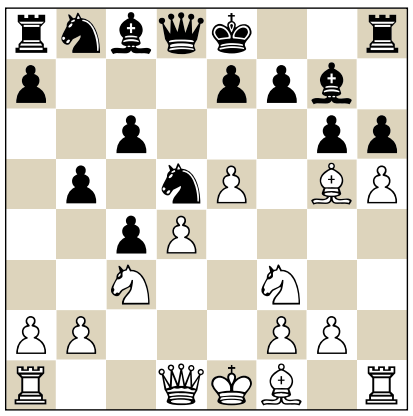
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

about the draughts games that were also broadcast in our hall), and it was great fun to chat about the games that had not yet finished.

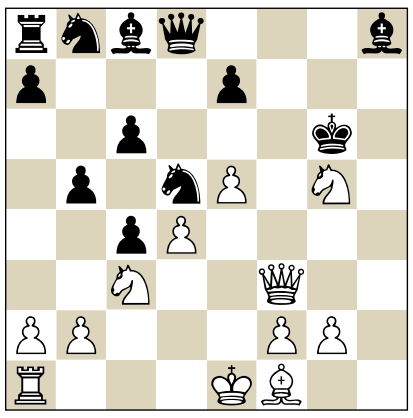
Here is one of the most action-packed games of the tournament.

GI 7.1 – D90
Ian Nepomniachtchi
Anish Giri
Beijing blitz 2013 (5)

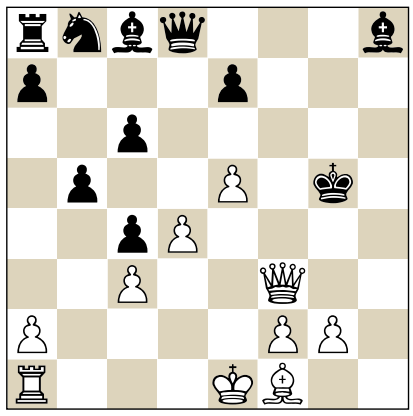
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5 4.♘f3 ♗g7 5.h4 c6 6.♗g5 dxc4 7.e4 b5 8.e5 ♘d5 9.h5 h6



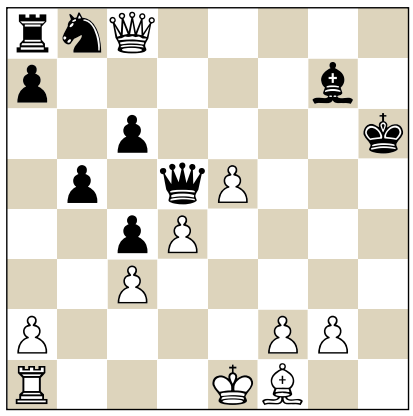
10.hxg6!
A very nice idea in blitz.
10...hxg5
10...fxg6 might actually be the only way not to lose by force, but this position is just too unpleasant to play in a normal game, let alone a blitz game.
11.♖xh8+ ♗xh8 12.gxf7+ ♔xf7
12...♔f8?! is bad: 13.♘xg5 ♗f5 14.♕h5 ♗g7 15.g4, and White is winning.
13.♘xg5+ ♔g6
After 13...♔g7 14.♕h5 ♕g8 15.♘xd5 cxd5 16.0-0-0 White is completely winning, despite being a piece down.
14.♕f3!



14...♘xc3
14...♔xg5 loses in the same fashion: 15.♗e2! ♔h6 (15...♔g6 16.0-0-0, and wins) 16.0-0-0 ♕e8 17.♘xd5 cxd5 18.♖h1+ ♔g7 19.♗d1!, and Black is too late to transfer his pieces to the kingside. I don't know how much Ian knew or whether it was just some blitz inspiration to put problems, but either way it was a lot of fun!
15.bxc3 ♔xg5
15...♕d5 runs into 16.♕g3.

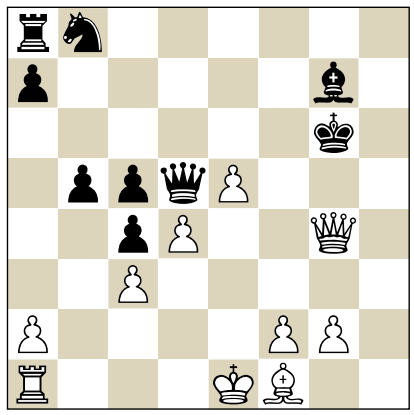


16.♕f7?
This move actually makes me think it was not preparation, or maybe Ian had forgotten the whole point.
16.♗e2! was winning on the spot again, for instance 16...♕e8 17.♔d2 ♔h6 18.♖h1+ ♔g7 19.♕e3.
16...♕d5!
Anish finds the only defence now, giving his king some relief.
17.♕xe7+ ♔h6 18.♕f8+ ♗g7 19.♕xc8



19...c5? But he cracks under pressure! I don't know what he was afraid of after 19...♕d7! 20.♕g8 ♕d5, as White cannot avoid repetition or the queen swap: 21.♕xd5 cxd5 22.♖b1 a6 23.a4, with unclear play.

20.♕h3+ ♔g6 21.♕g4+?!
21.♗e2 was even stronger.

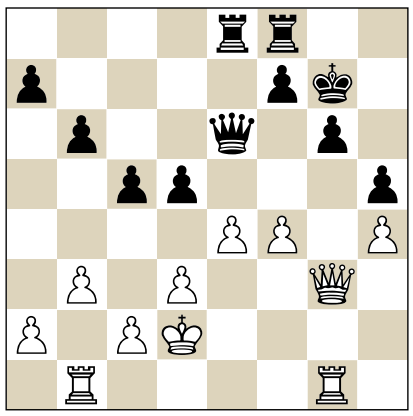


21...♔h7
Black would have a bad endgame after 21...♔f7! 22.♕f5+ ♔e7 23.♕g6 ♗xe5 24.♕g5+ ♔d6 25.dxe5+ ♕xe5+ 26.♕xe5+ ♔xe5 27.a4, but it was the best he could hope for.
22.0-0-0
And White is completely in control again, as his pieces come over to the kingside.
22...♘c6 23.♗e2 cxd4
He might have tried 23...♘xe5! 24.♕f5+ ♔g8 25.♗f3 ♘d3+ 26.♕xd3, although White remains on top.
24.♕f5+ ♔g8 25.♗f3 ♕xe5 26.♗d5+
Black resigned.
A nice end to this nice blitz game, despite the inaccuracies.

Beijing blitz 2013

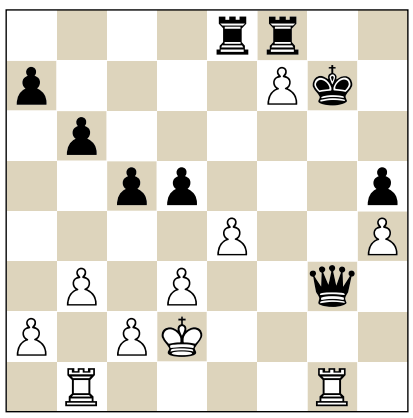
1	**Sergey Karjakin**	IGM	RUS	2837	**19½**
2	**Levon Aronian**	IGM	ARM	2817	**19½**
3	**Maxime Vachier-Lagrave**	IGM	FRA	2825	**18**
4	**Shakhriyar Mamedyarov**	IGM	AZE	2721	**18**
5	**Ian Nepomniachtchi**	IGM	RUS	2830	**17**
6	**Le Quang Liem**	IGM	VIE	2841	**17**
7	**Alexander Grischuk**	IGM	RUS	2798	**16½**
8	**Ruslan Ponomariov**	IGM	UKR	2774	**14½**
9	**Anish Giri**	IGM	NED	2747	**14½**
10	**Vassily Ivanchuk**	IGM	UKR	2750	**14**
11	**Gata Kamsky**	IGM	USA	2671	**13½**
12	**Leinier Dominguez**	IGM	CUB	2769	**13½**
13	**Teimour Radjabov**	IGM	AZE	2755	**12**
14	**Wang Yue**	IGM	CHN	2723	**11**
15	**Peter Leko**	IGM	HUN	2722	**11**
16	**Wang Hao**	IGM	CHN	2698	**10½**

16 players, 30 rounds

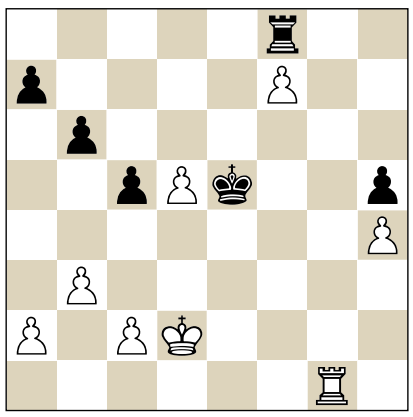


Karjakin-Grischuk
Beijing blitz 2013 (16)
position after 23...d5

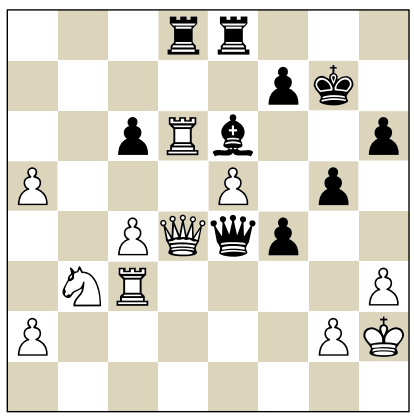
Here Sergey came up with some very nice tactics to claim the game.
24.f5 ♕e5 25.fxg6 ♕xg3 26.gxf7!



26...♖xe4 Inventive but not enough to make a draw. 26...♕xg1 hits on 27.fxe8♘+!, and White is winning; a very easy shot to miss indeed. Best was 26...♔xf7! 27.♖xg3 dxe4 28.♖g5, and White is still much better in this endgame.
27.dxe4 ♕xg1
27...♕g4 loses to 28.♖xg4+ hxg4 29.exd5 ♖xf7 30.♔e3.
28.♖xg1+ ♔f6 29.exd5 ♔e5

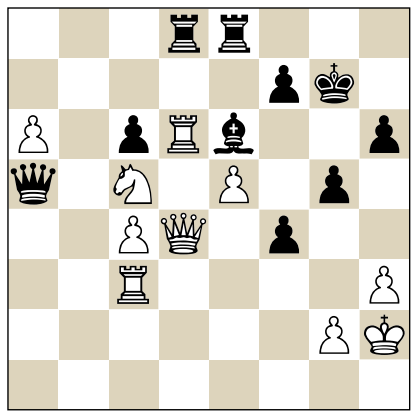


30.♖f1!
The most precise way to win. White liquidates by force to a winning pawn endgame. **30...♔xd5 31.♔e3 ♔e5 32.c4 a6 33.a4 a5 34.♖f2 ♔e6 35.♔e4** And Black is in zugzwang. **35...♔e7 36.♔e5 ♖xf7 37.♖xf7+ ♔xf7** Black resigned.

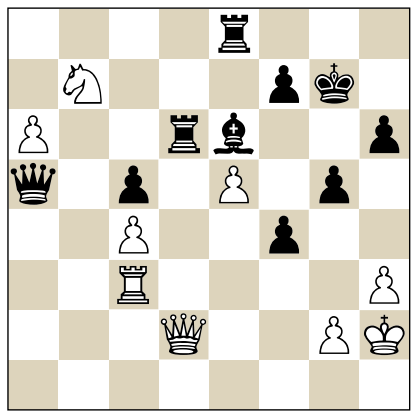


Vachier-Lagrave-Le Quang Liem
Beijing blitz 2013 (4)
position after 43.♕d4

43...♕e2 44.a6
One of the very rare occasions where the ChessBase threat arrows would have been extremely useful for both players!
44...♕xa2 45.♘c5 ♕a5
After a series of moves played at lightning speed we both spotted that the ♖d8 had been under attack. But seeing my next move I believed it didn't matter anyway...



46.♘b7 c5 This threw me completely off balance! **47.♕d2** 47.♘xc5 had curtains written all over it. **47...♖xd6**



48.♘xd6??
48.exd6 still wins a piece: 48...♕xa6 49.d7 ♗xd7 50.♕xd7.
48...♖a8 49.♖b3?? A panic move.
49...♕xd2 And Black won.
I must admit that I didn't go through all the games of the blitz event, but I doubt that any other game had a more twisted end.

Beijing Basque 2013

1	Sergey Karjakin	IGM	RUS	2787	8½
2	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	IGM	AZE	2795	6½
3	Ruslan Ponomariov	IGM	UKR	2748	6
4	Vassily Ivanchuk	IGM	UKR	2732	5½
5	Gata Kamsky	IGM	USA	2734	5½
6	Alexander Grischuk	IGM	RUS	2828	5½
7	Wang Yue	IGM	CHN	2729	5½
8	Le Quang Liem	IGM	VIE	2756	5
9	Wang Hao	IGM	CHN	2690	4½
10	Ian Nepomniachtchi	IGM	RUS	2799	4½
11	Levon Aronian	IGM	ARM	2797	4½
12	Leinier Dominguez	IGM	CUB	2758	4½
13	Anish Giri	IGM	NED	2700	4
14	Teimour Radjabov	IGM	AZE	2749	3½
15	Maxime Vachier-Lagrave	IGM	FRA	2761	3½
16	Peter Leko	IGM	HUN	2738	3

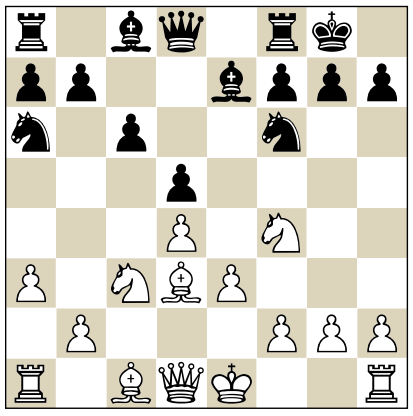
16 players, 5 rounds

I already mentioned the Basque system. More testing is needed to decide on the best time-controls, point scoring systems and what not, but it definitely was a fun experiment for the players. But any adjustments would probably have made no difference in deciding the winner of this tournament. From the suspense point of view, the Basque tournament was a complete failure, as it was a one-man-show. Sergey Karjakin finished with an imposing 8½ out of 10 result, an abyssal two points ahead of Mamedyarov, who came clear second. I'll leave you with a sample of of Sergey's games.

NI 10.12 – E46
Le Quang Liem
Sergey Karjakin
Beijing Basque 2013 (4)

This was probably Sergey's best effort in the Basque tournament.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 0-0 5.♘e2 d5 6.a3 ♗e7 7.cxd5 exd5 8.♘f4 c6 9.♗d3 ♘a6



Sergey Karjakin is all set for another round of his new specialty, Basque chess. Two chess sets, two clocks, one arbiter, the only thing still missing is an opponent.

10.0-0

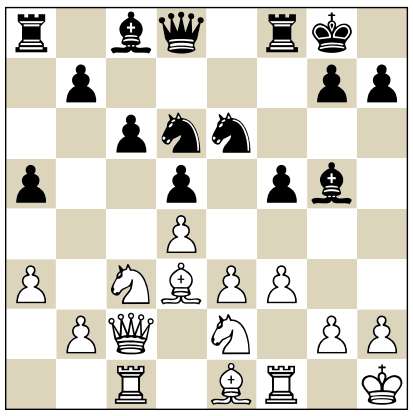
10.♗xa6?! bxa6 11.0-0 ♗d6 may look like good news for White, who has shattered Black's queenside, but the bishop pair is too important a factor, especially in view of the absence of White's light-squared one, as White cannot efficiently attack the pawns on a6 and c6.

10...♘c7 11.♗d2 ♘e6 12.♘fe2 a5 13.♖c1 ♘e8 14.f3 f5 15.♔h1 ♘d6

This looks fine for Black, who firmly controls the centre.

16.♕c2 ♗f6 17.♗e1 ♗g5

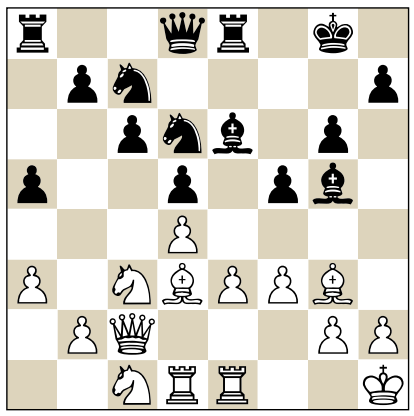
It is important to prevent the bishop from coming all the way to e5.



18.♗f2

18.f4 ♗f6 19.♘g1 deserved attention – to bring the knight to the all-important e5-square, but of course Black gets the e4-square in return: 19...♘e4 20.♘f3 ♗d7 21.h3.

18...g6 19.♖cd1 ♘c7 20.♘f4 ♘e6 21.♘fe2 ♘c7 22.♖fe1 ♖e8 23.♘c1 ♗e6 24.♗g3



24...♗h4!

Contrary to appearances, exchanging the dark-squared bishops looks like a nice deal for Black, even though the ♗e6 seems quite restricted.

25.♕f2 ♗xg3 26.♕xg3 ♗f7

The point is that now Black can more efficiently put pressure on the e3-pawn.

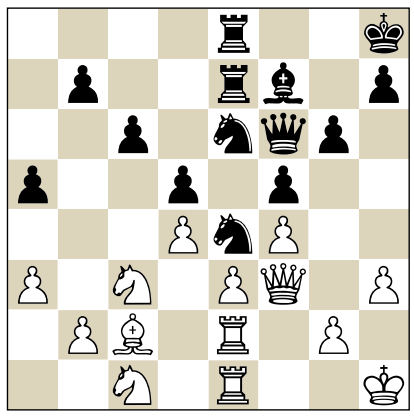
27.h3 ♕f6 28.♕f2 ♖e7 29.♖e2 ♖ae8 30.♖de1 ♘e6

And now Black is completely fine and threatens f4.

31.f4 ♘e4 32.♕f3

32.♗xe4 was called for, although White's position becomes somewhat unpleasant after 32...dxe4 33.♖c2 ♘c7 34.♘a4 ♘d5 35.♘e2. Still, on closer inspection, White's position is not so bad at all.

32...♔h8 33.♗c2



33...g5

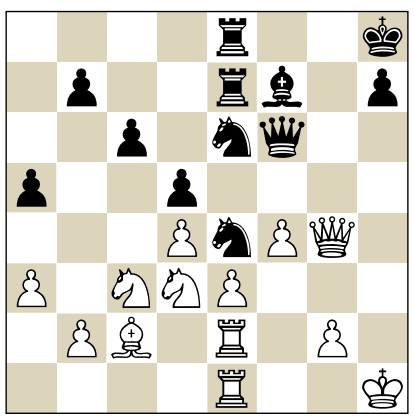
Again the correct choice! Black now gets an initiative on the white king. Simple and strong.

34.♘d3?

34.fxg5 ♕xg5 35.♗xe4 fxe4 36.♕f1 looked very scary but had to be played: 36...♖g8 37.♖f2 ♗h5 38.♘1e2!, and White still has some pieces to defend the kingside.

34...g4 35.hxg4 fxg4 36.♕xg4

Grandmasterly friends. Levon Aronian tied for first in the blitz. With her overall best result in the women's competition Hou Yifan contributed heavily to the rich harvest of Chinese medals.



36...♖g8?!

36...♕h6+! was the most precise win: 37.♔g1 (37.♕h3 ♘g3+ 38.♔h2 – 38.♔g1 ♕xh3 39.gxh3 ♘xd4! – 38...♕xh3+ 39.gxh3 ♘xe2 40.♘xe2 ♗g6!) 37...♖g8 38.♕f5 ♘g3 39.♕e5+ ♖g7, and White can no longer defend against the various threats: 40.♘f2 ♗h5! 41.♖d2 ♘c7, and White's queen is trapped!

37.♕h3 ♘g3+

Again 37...♖g6!, playing against the white king, was more precise, when the threat on the h-file proves decisive: 38.♔g1 ♖h6 39.♕f3 ♗h5 40.♘xe4 dxe4 41.♕xe4 ♗xe2 42.♖xe2 ♘xd4!.

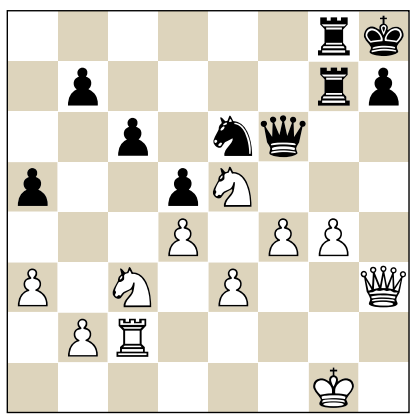
38.♔g1 ♘xe2+ 39.♖xe2 ♗g6

Black nevertheless keeps the upper hand.

40.♘e5 ♗xc2 41.♖xc2 ♖eg7 42.g4?!

A natural move to prevent ...♖g3, but it fails to a nice reply.

42.♖e2 ♖g3 43.♕h5 ♘d8!, followed by ...♕g7, was still in Black's favour, but White keeps some chances to hold.



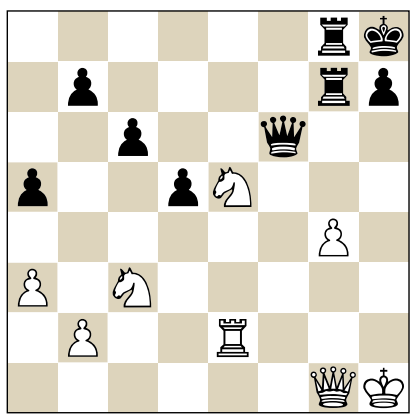
42...♘xf4! 43.exf4 ♕xf4

And White is again defenceless.

44.♔h1 ♕xd4 45.♖e2 ♕f4

45...♖f8! was even stronger.

46.♕h2 ♕f1+ 47.♕g1 ♕f6



48.♕d4

48.♕f2!, and White has some chances to hold if he manages to exchange queens.

48...♖f8 Now this comes again, with decisive effect.

49.♔h2 h5! 50.gxh5 c5

And White can't prevent huge material losses.

51.♕d3

51.♘xd5 cxd4 52.♘xf6 loses to 52...♖xf6.

51...♕h4+ 52.♕h3 ♕f4+ 53.♔h1 ♕c1+

White resigned.

Despite a few inaccuracies after he got a winning position, this was a very consistent game by Karjakin, especially as he had to play another game at the same time!

I myself fell for the main difficulty of this type of game, as I got overwhelmed with the challenge to solve problems on both boards, losing a lot of time and thus spoiling the two promising first matches against Ponomariov and Wang Yue. It is as tough as it looks at first sight to handle two complicated positions at the same time, and it didn't really get better from there. Especially with the white pieces I managed a truly unbeatable ½ point out of 5. Then it was already time for the closing ceremony, along with the final, general medal ceremony. This year we ended with eight different medallists, with Karjakin having by far the best combined result, of course – which could have been even better if he had not collapsed on the second day of the rapid.

The women's rapid event was won by Valentina Gunina (6) ahead of Hou Yifan (5). In the blitz the finishing order was the other way round, with Hou Yifan coming out on top with 19 points, ahead of Gunina (18) and Anna Muzychuk (17). In the Basque tournament, Zhao Xue and Hou Yifan tied for first, with the former winning gold, as she won one of her games against the World Champion.

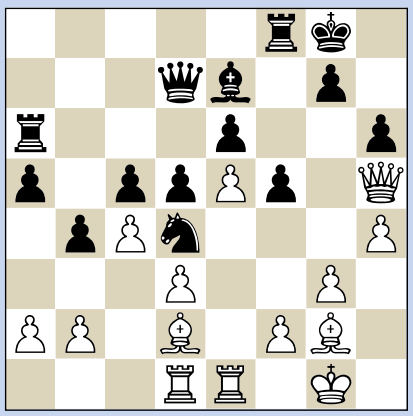
The winning nation of the World Mind Games turned out to be China, with no fewer than nine gold medals, with Russia finishing in second place with six. ■

Yochanan Afek

Beware: Brilliancy!

Oversights are part of the practice of each and every one of us. All six positions below were played by masters and grandmasters in the recent European Team championship in Warsaw. Can you improve on their play?

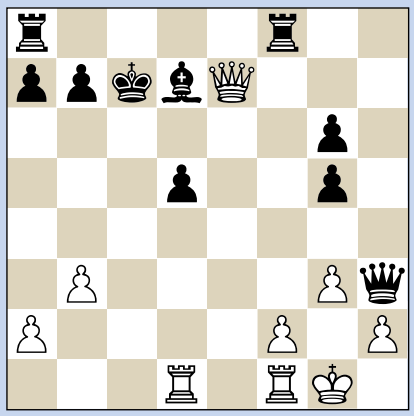
★☆☆☆☆



1. White to play

Here White found nothing better than **23.♗xh6 gxh6 24.♕g6+ ♔h8 25.♕xh6+ ♔g8 26.♕g6+ ♔h8 27.♕h6+ ♔g8 28.♕g6+ ♔h8** and a draw was agreed. Was there anything better than that?

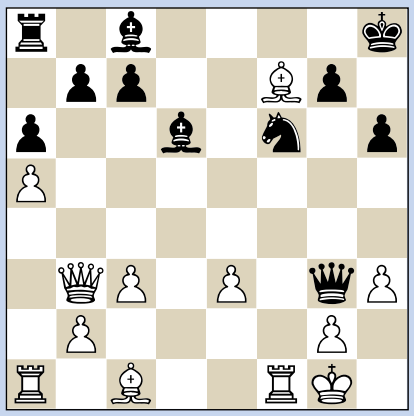
★★☆☆☆



2. White to play

Having sacrificed a piece for a rather promising attack White continued **28.♖c1+ ♔b6 29.♕c5+** and after he had missed a couple of winning lines the game eventually ended in perpetual check. Could he have won?

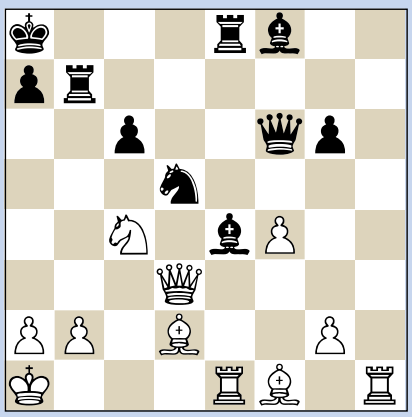
★★★☆☆



3. White to play

With an exchange sacrifice Black had obtained a dangerous attack. White failed to spot the only defence against the devastating threat 23…♗xh3 and quickly collapsed after **23.♖a4 ♗xh3 24.♕xb7 ♕h2+ 25.♔f2 ♗g3+ 26.♔e2 ♗xg2** etc. What should he have played instead?

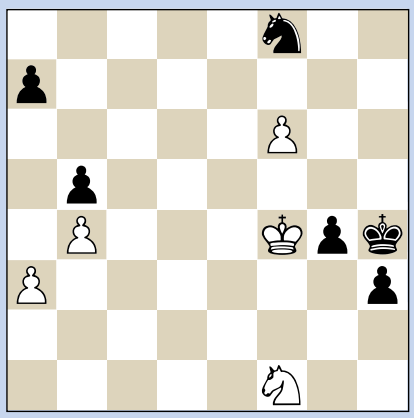
★★★☆☆



4. Black to play

Black rushed to capture the enemy queen by **29…♗xd3 30.♖xe8+ ♖b8 31.♖xb8+ ♔xb8 32.♗xd3 ♘xf4 33.♗c3 ♕g5 34.♗e5+ ♔c8 35.♗e4 ♔d7 36.♖d1+ ♘d5 37.a3**, after which he he had hardly any avantage, and later even lost. Do you have a better idea?

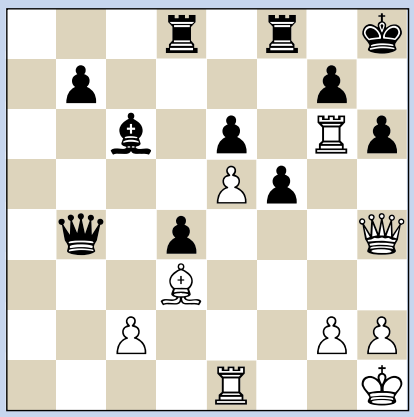
★★★★☆



5. Black to play

Black simplified to a drawish ending by **56…♔h5 57.♘g3+ ♔g6 58.♔xg4 ♔xf6 59.♔xh3 ♔e5 60.♔g4 ♘e6 61.♘f5 ♘d4 62.♘e7 ♔e4 63.♘c8 a6 64.♘e7 ♘c2 65.♘c6 ♘xa3 66.♘b8 a5 67.bxa5 b4 68.♘a6 ♘c4**, duly splitting the point. Could you handle this stage of the battle in a more subtle manner?

★★★★★



6. Black to play

Black chose the most natural and active **26…♕d2** However, he had to settle for a draw by repetition after **27.♖e2 ♕c1+ 28.♖e1 ♕d2 29.♖e2 ♕c1+ 30.♖e1 ♕d2 31.♖e2** etc. Was it the best he could get?

The number of stars roughly indicates their estimated level of difficulty: 1 is easiest and 5 most difficult. Solutions on page 99

Hans Ree

Who can say no to Nimzowitsch?

Aron Nimzowitsch 1928-1935, games and essays has been described as a posthumous sequel to Nimzowitsch's great works *My System* and *Chess Praxis*. Not fond of systems, Hans Ree found Nimzowitsch's mixed bag of previously uncollected articles sometimes quirky, sometimes touching and always interesting.

The German chess historian Rudolf Reinhardt, editor of this book, spent many years collecting Nimzowitsch's games, annotations and articles from many sources and written in many different languages. His original intention was to publish all his material, but in consultation with his German publisher, Arno Nickel, he decided to restrict himself to the period after 1927.

He wrote a short foreword to the German edition of 2010, but his much longer introduction to the book was cut off in mid-sentence when he suddenly died of a stroke in September 2006.

Nickel writes in a preface: 'A thick blue manuscript folder lay in front of me on the table and "threatened" – with lots of work and little prospect of sale. Since it was clear to me that Rudolf had invested much lifeblood and no less meticulousness and expertise in his enterprise – and who can say "no" to Nimzowitsch anyway? – it was really just a matter of how and when to publish.'

I think and hope that Nickel was far too pessimistic about the prospective sales of this important book.

This big book of more than 400 pages covers only eight years, although you might as well say only seven, since in 1935 Nimzowitsch was hospitalized in Copenhagen. He died there, 48 years old, on March 16th, probably of pneumonia.

I cannot read these articles or play over the games without thinking of his early death. His victory in Carlsbad 1929 was the greatest success of his life. Only six years to go, I always think.

Hyper-nervous and kind

There is a story in the book, taken from the tournament bulletin of Zürich 1934 and written by the Swiss master Fritz Gygli, about Nimzowitsch's game against Emanuel Lasker, a difficult knight ending which he eventually won.

There was noise in the room from his colleagues and other kibitzers and suddenly Nimzowitsch took the floor, shouting: 'Gentlemen, in the name of the tournament director, who is not here, I sincerely request that, if it is not possible to make less noise, then we should all go home. I am disturbed, incessantly disturbed, catastrophically disturbed! I cannot play on like this!' With ruffled hair, eyebrows crackling with static, and with his words sizzling through the air like the electric flash of a short-circuit. Thus wrote Gygli.

The next morning, when Nimzowitsch took his usual walk along the lake, an acquaintance told him that there was a nasty rumour that he had chased his colleagues home. He was appalled by his alleged discourtesy and immediately wanted to go out and ask all his colleagues to please come back.

Gygli wrote: 'Nimzowitsch would no doubt have done this, had an idea not suddenly and irresistibly compelled him to pull out his pocket chess set, sit down on a bench on the Alp quay and forget the world, his colleagues, and even himself for the next two hours.'

This is Nimzowitsch as we know him from many reports; hyper-sensitive and utterly involved in chess. Less than a year later he died.

Zürich was not a great success for Nimzowitsch. He tied for sixth place with Bernstein, four points behind the victor Alekhine. His hopes for a world championship match, which he had been cherishing since Carlsbad 1929, had evaporated.

By the way, in the book about Capablanca by Euwe and Prins, I found a curious footnote by Prins to his annotations to Capablanca–Nimzowitsch, Kissingen 1928: 'Around 1926, after the Cuban had been chal-

lenged by both Alekhine and Nimzowitsch, he is supposed to have said: "What would keep me from playing these matches simultaneously?"' I wonder who told Prins this.

Prophylaxis with Tal and Petrosian

One month after Zürich, in August 1934, Nimzowitsch won the Nordic Chess Congress in Copenhagen, which was a good result, as the Nordic masters Lundin, Stahlberg, Enevoldsen and Stoltz were already quite strong.

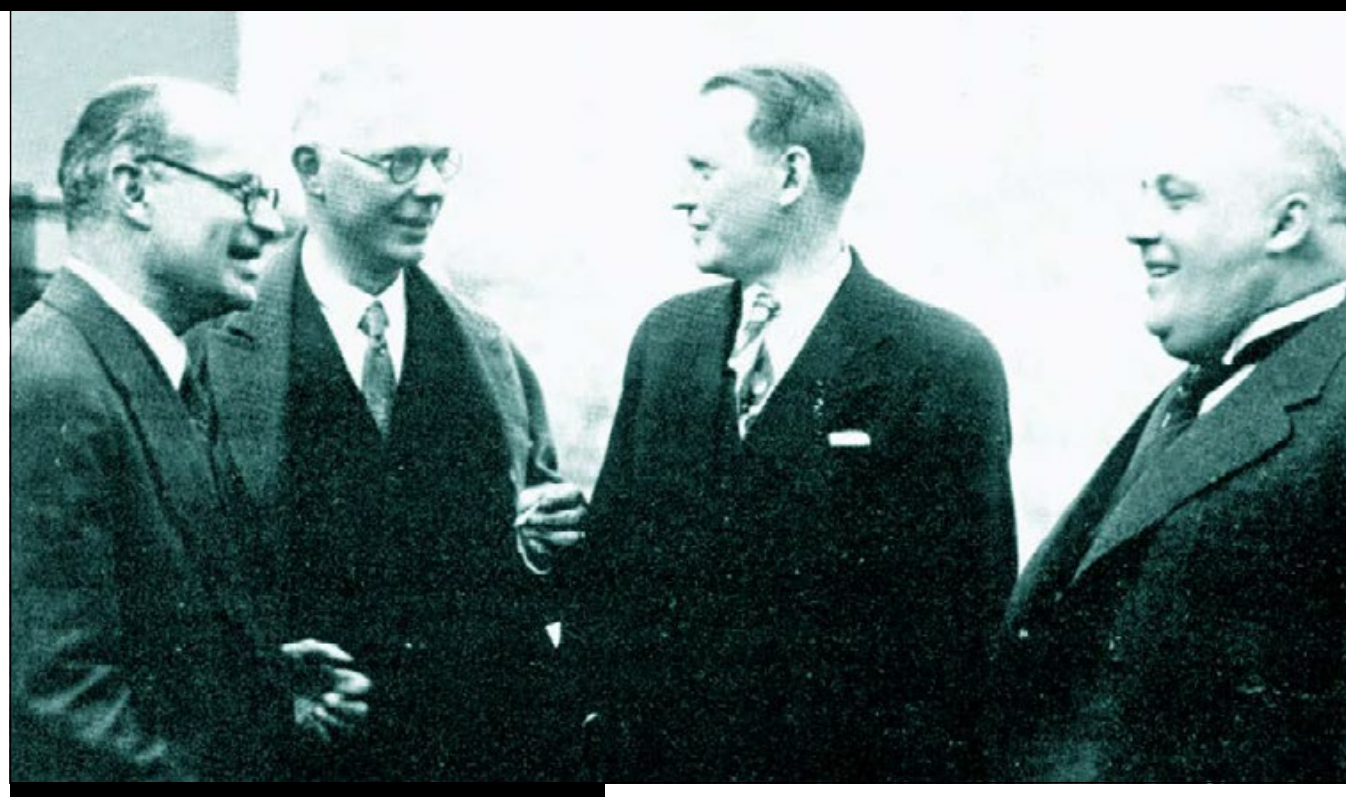
What if he had lived to a normal age? And what is a normal life expectancy for a Jew born in Latvia in 1886? This would largely depend on his whereabouts during World War II. Nimzowitsch had lived in Denmark since 1922, where during the war almost all Jews were saved. So let's imagine that he had not fallen ill late in 1934 and instead had lived, let's say, 30 years longer, till the age of 78.

He would have witnessed the rise of Tal and his victory over Botvinnik in their world championship match in 1960, and he might have wondered what had become of his cherished concepts of blockade, prophylaxis and over-protection, the essence of his beloved slow chess spiced with tactics. These concepts played no role in Tal's whirlwind attacks.

On the other hand, Nimzowitsch would also have lived to see Tigran Petrosian's victory over Botvinnik in 1963. In a foreword to a new Russian edition of *Die Praxis meines Systems* (Chess Praxis), Petrosian later wrote: 'Each time I leaf through the *Chess Praxis*, the book that I literally kept under my pillow and read in my childhood as fairy-tales, I rediscover A. Nimzowitsch's maxims that, as I understand now, had become the basis of my chess views a long time ago.' Slow chess had been triumphant in 1963, as it is now with Magnus Carlsen.

The Haeckel School of Chess

The German biologist Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) has primarily become famous for his recapitulation theory, which has been summarized as 'ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny', meaning that the development of the individual embryo resembles the evolutionary history of the species it belongs to.



Aron Nimzowitsch and Hans Kmoch chat with World Champion Alexander Alekhine and his challenger Efim Bogoljubow during their World Championship match in Germany in 1934.

There has been a school of chess training, not popular nowadays, that might be called the Haeckel school of chess, because it held the view that the development of an individual player's style should recapitulate the history of chess thinking. So, at first the aspiring pupil would be encouraged to play for quick attacks in the style of Greco, then he would learn about Philidor, Morphy, Steinitz, Nimzowitsch, and so on, until he finally arrived at the Soviet school of chess, which integrated all chess knowledge. My description is a caricature, for if a real-life student really would have to go through all these stages, he would reach retirement age before finishing his chess education.

But still, there is the often repeated maxim that 'a young player should play gambits', which may be considered a left-over from the Haeckel school. The late Dutch IM Rob Hartoch, a dear friend, suffered from this approach when he prepared for the World Junior championship of 1965 in Barcelona. He was assisted by a strong member of his club who himself was a keen attacking player, and I still remember Rob's complaints: 'He only wants to look at gambits and when I say that I don't like my position, a pawn down, he switches to another gambit.' Hartoch dismissed his trainer, reverted to his normal quiet positional style and finished second in the championship, behind Bojan Kurajica.

I once read that the Polgar sisters were trained from a very young age by means of wallpaper in their bedrooms that consisted of diagrams with tactical exercises, renewed almost daily. This seems to be the modern way of coaching beginners: sharpening a feeling for tactics is considered far more fruitful than studying the history of positional play. With luck, the young pupil may eventually become interested in the dead white males of chess history, but knowledge of the classics is not regarded as essential for becoming a strong player.

Can we still learn from him?

As Nimzowitsch's articles were meant to be instructive, the question arises whether they are still able to instruct now, a century after what he called 'the Chess Revolution of 1911-1914'.

In New In Chess 2007/5, Jonathan Rowson wrote about a new edition of *My System* and about a book that he thinks is set to become a modern classic, *San Luis 2005* (the world championship tournament won by Topalov) by Alik Gershon and Igor Nor. His

Hans Ree

article has the provocative title 'We Don't Need No Education'.

Surely this was partly tongue-in-cheek, as Rowson obviously appreciates 'chess education' which, as he describes it, includes not only the technical aspects of playing chess, but also knowing who Rubinstein was and not only thinking of one's girlfriend when the word prophylaxis is mentioned.

But there is a serious point to the frivolous heading. Can we still learn from Nimzowitsch? Rowson wrote: 'In fact, I suspect any player who reads *My System* from cover to cover unquestioningly, will do their chess more harm than good.'

From my own experience, I tend to agree. I read *My System* more than 50 years ago, and if I remember rightly – but I may be wrong – my playing level suffered for a while after reading Nimzowitsch. Maybe it was too difficult for me, but it was also too idiosyncratic. Maybe good for him, but not for me.

That's not to say that I didn't like the book; on the contrary. As Rowson wrote, after his warning that it might damage one's chess: 'That said, those who read it with discrimination, and with sufficient historical perspective, can still learn from it, and enjoy Nimzowitsch's inimitable tone.'

Especially enjoy his inimitable tone, I would say. I used to read the classics – Tarrasch, Nimzowitsch, Réti, Tartakower, Alekhine and others – because I was interested in the authors and in their tumultuous era, not primarily to improve my chess. But of course, some insights would seep through and stick.

Rowson finished his discussion of *My System* with another warning: 'However, please don't rely on it as some sort of foundation on which to build your chess strength, because the game Nimzowitsch wrote about no longer exists.'

Tartakower's scepticism

I just wrote that Nimzowitsch's insights may have been good for him, though not for me, but in Reinhardt's book there is an amusing and illuminating quote from Tartakower that suggests that even Nimzowitsch himself may occasionally have been hampered by the constraints of his system.

Tartakower wrote a preview of the tournament of San Remo 1930, won by Alekhine with Nimzowitsch finishing second – a fine result in itself, but overshadowed by the fact that the gap between him and Alekhine, who scored an almost unbelievable 14 out of 15, was 3½ points.

In his preview, Tartakower wrote that Alekhine was obviously the all-out favourite, but that even in Capablanca's absence the outcome was in no way certain, 'because for a year now, Nimzowitsch has especially exhibited the highest strength. This upsurge in form of the Baltic (or Danish) grandmaster is explained by the fact that he had previously constructed abstract systems, and then wanted to shoehorn his games into those schemes. Now, however, he plays in a breezy style with firm confidence in his tactical skill, and seeks to classify his achievements ideologically only after the victory has been achieved. If he won, say, through the advance f4-f5, then it was a victorious centralization, but if he seizes an important point through the retreat ...♘f6-g8, then it was an even more victorious decentralization, and so on!'

Apparently, the sceptic Tartakower found Nimzowitsch's system fine if used in an opportunistic way – to add lustre to deeds already done – but not as a roadmap to guide the way. Reinhardt comments: 'Nimzowitsch would have keenly disagreed with this perspective! But perhaps Dr. Tartakower isn't so wrong?'

Alekhine proves nothing

In San Remo, Nimzowitsch was beaten by Alekhine in a game that has become

NOT YET A SUBSCRIBER?

You are not yet a subscriber to New In Chess? Give it a try. Take out a subscription today on the premier chess magazine in the world, and receive 8 issues a year, immediately after publication, on your doormat!

	EUROPE	U.K.	U.S.A, CANADA, MEXICO	REST OF THE WORLD
1 year (8 issues)	€ 79.99	£ 59.99	$ 89.99	€ 79.99
2 years (16 issues)	€149.99	£119.99	$169.99	€149.99
3 years (24 issues)	€219.99	£169.99	$239.99	€219.99

SUBSCRIBE DIRECTLY AT WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

New In Chess, P.O. Box 1093, 1810 KB Alkmaar, The Netherlands. Phone: 0031-(0)72 512 7137, Fax 0031-(0)72 515 8234, www.newinchess.com, nic@newinchess.com

USA and Canada only: New In Chess c/o Land of Chess, 707 Skokie Blvd, Suite 600, Northbrook, IL 60062, Phone: 847-480-2780, www.newinchess.com, nic@newinchess.com

Checks should be made payable to *Land of Chess*

famous and in which Nimzowitsch ended up being unable to move a single piece without losing one. He might have called it another immortal Zugzwang game.

One year later, at Bled 1931, Nimzowitsch was beaten twice by Alekhine, first in a gambit variation of the French, and, in the second leg of the tournament, after a Caro-Kann opening. In that game, Nimzowitsch, playing as White, was already lost after 12 moves. Bled 1931 was another astounding victory by Alekhine. He finished 5½ points ahead of Bogoljubow, who won second prize, and 6½ ahead of Nimzowitsch.

In 1932, Nimzowitsch wrote an article in *Kagans Neueste Schachnachrichten* entitled 'Is My Third Prize in Bled to be Considered a Relative Failure?' to prove that this didn't mean much.

He explained that a tooth problem, which only really revealed itself after the tournament, gave him a lot of trouble during the event and robbed him of the sleep that is doubly necessary during a tournament.

He went on: 'The defeats by Alekhine prove nothing, not even Alekhine's subjective superiority, let alone an objective one.' He pointed out that he had also been beaten by Bogoljubow a number of times, but that he had since won four and drawn three of their last seven tournament games. 'If Alekhine had wanted to prove his superiority, he would have had to defeat me in difficult fighting games. For an intelligent critic, surprise attacks do not constitute the slightest bit of evidence of intrinsic strength.'

Reinhardt, a Nimzowitsch fan, but not star-struck, comments: 'One might argue here that in three consecutive games against Alekhine, Nimzowitsch didn't even reach a fighting game, which could be attributed to Alekhine's credit.'

But Nimzowitsch would have nothing of such common-sense arguments. He repeats: 'That he caught me off guard in Bled, once in gambit style, and the second time with a nice trap, proves absolutely nothing. It was certainly only sheer coincidence.'

He refused to recognize that Bogoljubow and he himself were not in the same league as Alekhine at the time. In the same article, Nimzowitsch writes about the gloating critics with their obvious desire to harm him: 'Fortunately, this kind of criticism is disappearing today. Most critics cultivate a respectable approach and are painstaking and honest in their judgement. And it's nice like this.' He could be gentle.

'For an intelligent critic, surprise attacks do not constitute the slightest bit of evidence of intrinsic strength.'

In a foreword to Reinhardt's anthology, Raymond Keene, author of the fine *Aron Nimzowitsch, A Reappraisal* (1974; those were Ray's days) writes that he found these comments by Nimzowitsch enlightening and amusing, because taken together they formed a very eloquent argument.

I would like to share Raymond's amusement with Nimzowitsch's denial of Alekhine's obvious superiority, and would do so if I thought that Nimzowitsch had been amused himself while penning his defence. But I am more inclined to find it rather sad.

Be a child at heart

Though the bulk of this big book consists of game annotations, tournament reports and essays on technical aspects of chess, Nimzowitsch didn't shrink from touching other subjects, even those with only a very tenuous connection to chess. He wrote about art, literature and film, and discussed an American film at length in order to shed light on the notions of kitsch and simplicity and their relevance to chess. He described his regimen before an important tournament: wake up early, do morning exercises, take a long walk, eat a lot of fruit, abstain from alcohol, go to bed early. Health and gymnastics were recurring subjects – not a good sign, I think – and so were pessimism and dejection, his worst enemies during a tournament.

Many of these articles appeared in a publication I had never heard of, the German magazine *Denken und Raten*, which was devoted to all kind of puzzles and riddles, and even detective stories, but which also had a chess section with contributions by many of the world's best players, including Emanuel Lasker.

Nimzowitsch wrote many articles for *Denken und Raten*. One of these, 'The Gifted Amateur', written in 1930, is a spirited appeal to shake off the burden of too much knowledge – which would ossify the spirit – to become 'a child at heart' again. 'Let one be happy and unconcerned as a child. Forget life's gloomy seriousness and give oneself willingly to preoccupation with whim-wham and "play".' Later he writes: 'But the most important point is that it is from amateurs, and only from them, that we can expect the renewal of the art.'

You can raise some objections here (are children really so happy and unconcerned and haven't professionals also contributed to the renewal of our art?), but Nimzowitsch certainly expresses a longing that is shared – not all the time, just every so often – by many seasoned professionals. A longing for the time when everything was still new, before consciousness made cowards of us all. A longing for his youth. ■

The Road to Capablanca

In the run-up to the London Classic, I spent a lot of my spare time reading books about winning. A lot of the books were utterly forgettable but a few really stuck in my mind. Malcolm Gladwell's *David and Goliath* was completely inspiring. This book studies a number of underdog situations – the dyslexic who became a famous trial lawyer, the novice girls' basketball team that turned into a winning team – and constantly overturns your assumptions about what constitutes an advantage in a competitive situation. Inspired by it, I spent many of my daily walks to the station reciting arguments explaining the superiority of an amateur player over a professional player. By the end of it, I honestly couldn't understand how Kramnik was going to hold a draw against me!

The most interesting book however was *Bounce* by Matthew Syed, the long-time British No. 1 table-tennis player and three-times Commonwealth table-tennis Champion. I particularly loved his account of working with Chen Xinhua, a strong Chinese player who came to live in England in the early 90s. Chen Xinhua asked Syed to alter the technique of his forehand slice. Syed was really puzzled by this. As he writes himself, 'My stroke was highly variable, sometimes played with a high arc, sometimes with a bit of sidespin, often from below the level of the table, I prided myself on the variability of the shot, supposing it to be an aspect of my inventiveness.' Chen took a different view and got Syed – through many months of gruelling and frustrating effort – to develop a stroke that 'was identical in every respect on each and every shot'. Syed only understood the power of this adjustment much later. Bizarrely enough, the shot wasn't better or more effective on any given shot. However, **'it provided the perfect conditions for feedback'.** When his old forehand slice failed, it was impossible to pinpoint what Syed had done wrong, as he was doing so many unpredictable things. With his new predictable forehand slice, Syed could instantly pinpoint what he had done wrong, leading to 'automatic refinement and readjustment'. As Chen put it: 'If you don't know what you are doing wrong, you can never know what you are doing right.' In time Chen allowed Syed to add variations to introduce new spins and new speeds. 'But guess what? Every variation – each of which looked to the outsider creative and spontaneous – was also honed through hours of practice to be perfectly reproducible, providing noiseless feedback.' That's the best motivation I've ever heard for practising hard!

> 'I honestly couldn't understand how Kramnik was going to hold a draw against me!'

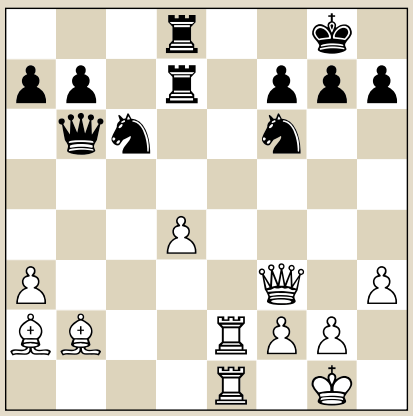
This book got me thinking about my thought processes during a chess game. At that time I was getting worried about my form for the London Classic. I felt I was probably capable of playing fairly well (I played OK in two games at the 4NCL) but I was so desperately SLOOOOWWWW. It didn't matter too much in longer games but I was beginning to dread having to operate at a fast time control. I tried playing a few training games against my computer at the London Classic time-control (25 minutes + 10 seconds increment) but got caught in two extremes. My standard approach was to build up a decent position slowly and then mess things up quickly as time got short. However, when I tried to speed up, the whole thing seemed to fall apart and my thinking became a total chaos. I ended up just getting pushed off the board as I flailed around planlessly. Just like Syed, I needed consistency and efficiency. Translating this to the chessboard, I needed to be able to choose decisively for a course of action or style of play in a position without needing masses of time to do so. I also needed to be secure tactically in order not to give anything easy away.

I decided that I needed someone's influence to rub off on me. Someone who played quickly and always seemed to know where his pieces should go. Capablanca was my man! So I reached for my credit card and got my hands on all the Capablanca books I could find: Capablanca's own *My Chess Career* and

Chess Fundamentals (of which Botvinnik once said 'everything is in there'), Edward Winter's wonderful compendium of obscure Capablanca material appropriately entitled *Capablanca*, and the Chess Stars 2-volume compendium of Capablanca's games. There was also another book which mentioned Capablanca in the blurb, so I decided to go for that one too. A momentous decision! That book was ***Best Play. A New Method For Discovering The Strongest Move*** by Alexander Shashin (Mongoose Press).

Before I start, bear in mind that this book comes with a health warning. A friend called the book unreadable, and I have lost count of the sceptical, sarcastic looks I have encountered when trying to explain some of the book's theories. The title is also a bit of a misnomer. As we shall see, I don't think that this book can help you discover specific moves, but it can help you to look in the right area for the correct move. I also have my doubts whether the most complex parts of the book (detailing the so-called 'Mixed Algorithms') are practically applicable: I didn't even attempt to do it! That said, some of the basic ideas are really worth thinking about.

The author's name seemed vaguely familiar, but it was only towards the end of the book that I realized where I had seen it before:

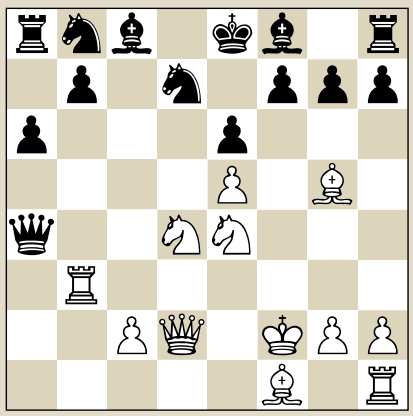


Shashin-Kortchnoi
Leningrad 1973

20.♕c3 ♘xd4 21.♖e7 ♖xe7 22.♖xe7 ♘f5 23.♖xf7 ♖d1+ 24.♔h2 ♕d6+ 25.g3 ♘g4+ 26.♔g2 ♘h4+ 27.gxh4 ♕h2+ 28.♔f3 ♕xf2+ 29.♔e4 ♕e2+ 29...♖e1+ 30.♔d5 ♘e3+ (30...♕xf7+ 31.♔d6 ♖d1+ 32.♔c5 b6+ 33.♔b4 a5+ 34.♔a4 b5+ 35.♔xa5) 31.♔d6 ♘c4+ 32.♕xc4 ♕b6+ 33.♔d7 ♖d1+ 34.♗d4 ♖xd4+ 35.♕xd4 ♕xd4+ 36.♔c8 and White wins! **30.♔f4 ♖f1+ 31.♔g5 h6+ 32.♔g6 ♘e5+ 33.♕xe5 ♖g1+ 34.♕g5 ♕xb2 35.♖xg7+ 1-0**

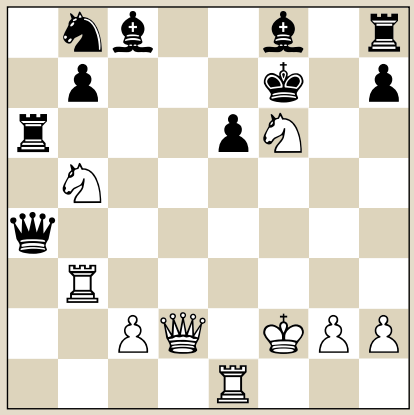
Someone who can play like that deserves to be listened to!

So where does it all start? The author postulates that there are basically 3 approaches to a position: you can attack, you can defend or you can play strategically. The author ties each of these 3 approaches to a master in that field: Tal for attack, Petrosian for defence and Capablanca for strategic play. Through analysis of these great players' games, the author tries to draw conclusions about the essence of their styles and to provide simple tips to play like Tal, Petrosian and Capablanca. I mentioned one such tip in a previous review of a Tal book: Tal makes 'open' (1-move) and 'direct' (2-move) attacks on the opponent's pieces. Let's just show one more example to illustrate this:



Tal-Tolush
Leningrad 1956

Let the one-move attacks begin! **15.♗b5** Attacking the queen. **15...axb5 16.♘xb5** Threatening to attack the king and a rook with ♘c7+. **16...f6 17.exf6 gxf6 18.♖e1 ♖a6 19.♗xf6** Attacking the rook on h8. **19...♘xf6 20.♘xf6+** Attacking the king. **20...♔f7**



21.♖f3 ♕h4+ 22.♔f1 e5 23.♕d5+ ♗e6 24.♘d7+ ♔g6 25.♘xe5+ ♔g7 26.♖g3+ ♕xg3 27.♕xb7+ ♘d7 28.hxg3 ♖b6 29.♕c7 ♗c5 30.♘xd7 ♗c4+ 31.♖e2 1-0

I found this an extremely evocative way of deciding on a plan in a position. Thinking of Tal or Capablanca while pondering a plan provided me with a good structured framework for choosing a course of action. It also got me thinking about patterns I'd noticed in these players' games which increased the chances of reusing them in my own games. This idea alone makes the book worthwhile for me! 'But!' you cry, 'how do I know when to play like Tal and when to play like Capablanca?' Well... here it starts to get spooky! We now start to get into the 'Algorithm Drift Chart'.

There is a famous quote of Capablanca's that 'Position comes first, material next. Space and Time are complementary factors of Position'. It sounds slightly mysterious but it gives an indication of the types of factors you should take into account when assessing a position. Shashin essentially translates this statement into a set of 5 parameters – 3 'strong' parameters (material, time and safety) and 2 'weak' parameters (compactness and elevation) – and devises a method of calculating numerical values for each parameter. He then assigns ranges of values to a style of play. So for example, a value of less than 0.80 for the time factor indicates that you should play like Petrosian. A value of more than 1.25 points to Tal while a value

in between suggests Capablanca. For every position you can draw up an 'algorithm chart' with a numerical value for each of the parameters. Not all parameters necessarily all point to the same style of play, so you sometimes have to make a judgment call as to which parameters are the most important in a certain position. Let's take a look at these parameters:

'Strong' parameters

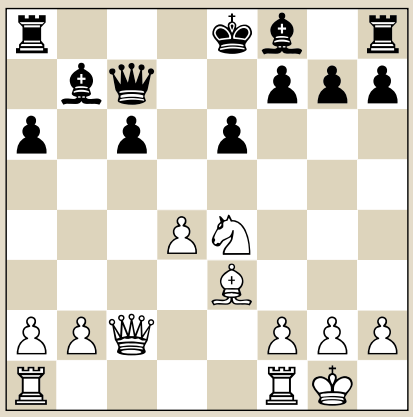
You always start with the strong parameters. If these point you clearly to a certain style of play, then you don't need to bother with the 'weak' parameters.

1. Material. Very obvious: if you're behind in material, then you should play like Tal! If you're ahead, play like Petrosian!

2. Time. The activity of the respective positions. Shashin has a very unusual way of calculating this parameter:

TD 2.12 – D41
Mikhail Tal
Zdravko Milev
Munich 1958

1.c4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.d4 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♗c4 ♘b6 8.♗b5 a6 9.♗xc6+ bxc6 10.0-0 ♗b7 11.♘e4 ♘d7 12.♕c2 ♕b6 13.♘e5 cxd4 14.♘xd7 ♔xd7 15.exd4 ♔e8 16.♗e3 ♕c7



Instead of counting tempi, Shashin focuses on the relative *mobility* of the pieces and pawns. In other words: to how many squares can the pawns and pieces move?

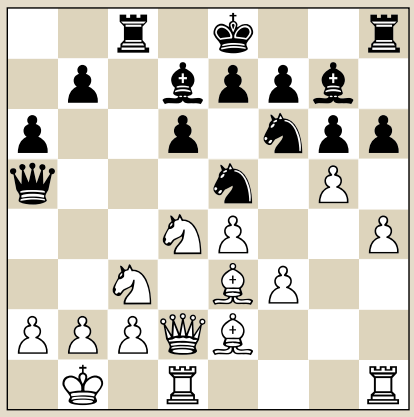
White king: can move to 1 square (h1)
White queen: can move to 12 squares (b1,c1,d1,d2,e2,b3,c3,d3,a4,c4,c5,c6)
White rook on f1: can move to 4 squares (e1,d1,c1,b1)
...and so on for all white and black pieces and pawns. If you add up the totals for White and Black, you get White = 44 & Black = 35. 44/35 is 1.26, which is within the Tal zone! So White needs to attack!

17.d5 exd5 18.♖fe1 ♔d8 19.♕b3 c5 20.♘xc5 ♗xc5 21.♗xc5 ♕xc5 22.♕xb7 1-0

3. Safety. Shashin calls this 'a very capricious and very sensitive parameter... It explodes at the lightest touch and I ask the reader to treat it delicately'. A weak king can be enough to completely undo any other advantages in the position. Shashin offers no mathematical formula for calculating king safety – it's a judgment call – but he does make a few points that tickled my fancy:

SI 17.2 – B75
Mikhail Tal
NN
Stuttgart simul 1958

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♗e3 ♗g7 7.f3 ♘c6 8.♕d2 ♗d7 9.0-0-0 ♕a5 10.♔b1 ♖c8 11.g4 h6 12.h4 a6 13.♗e2 ♘e5? 14.g5!



Talking about the relative safety of the two kings, Shashin makes 2 points:

1. The squares immediately adjacent to the black king (d7, d8, e7, f7, f8) are well-defended. The king is safely 'cocooned' or 'tightly-packed'.
2. However, in the rectangle d1-d8-e8-e1 (in which the black king is placed) White has an extra queen and rook, which means that White's superiority there is overwhelming.

The second observation in particular seems of doubtful value, but both made me stop and think... which happens quite often with this book!

14...hxg5 15.hxg5 ♖xh1 16.gxf6! ♖xd1+ 17.♘xd1! ♕xd2 18.fxg7! 1-0

So far we haven't seen anything too remarkable, although the method of calculating the time parameter might raise some eyebrows. The next two parameters are more exotic!

'Weak' parameters

You calculate these parameters if the strong parameters are inconclusive. You could say that both these parameters are concerned with the quality of the position and in particular with space. You are more likely to use these in a Capablanca situation than in a Tal situation.

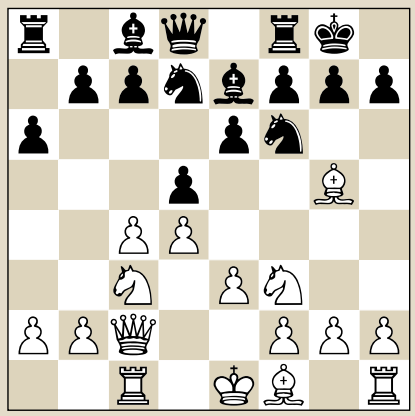
1. Compactness

Shashin's contention is that the denser your position (fewer gaps or holes), the more latent energy your position contains and thus the more likely you are to be able to launch an attack.

Sounds a bit vague, but I loved this example and the explanation:

QO 13.5 – D63
Jose Raul Capablanca
A. Schroeder
New York 1916

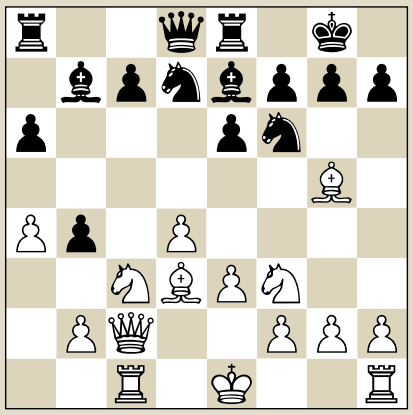
1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 e6 3.c4 ♘f6 4.♘c3 ♘bd7 5.♗g5 ♗e7 6.e3 0-0 7.♖c1 a6 8.♕c2



8...♖e8 Strangely enough, 4 years later Capablanca reached almost ex-

actly the same type of position again. This game demonstrates the danger in the ending in this type of structure. 8...dxc4 9.♗xc4 b5 10.♗d3 ♗b7 11.a4 b4 12.♗xf6 ♘xf6 13.♘e4 ♗xe4 14.♗xe4 ♘xe4 15.♕xe4 c5 16.dxc5 ♕a5 17.b3 ♗xc5 18.♘g5 g6 19.♕h4 h5 20.♘e4 ♖fc8 21.♕g5 ♗b6 22.♕xa5 ♗xa5 23.♔e2 ♗d8 24.♘d6 ♖c7 25.♖c4 ♖d7 26.♘e4 ♗e7 27.♖d1 ♖xd1 28.♔xd1 ♖d8+ 29.♔e2 ♖d5 30.♖c6 a5 31.♘d2 ♔g7 32.♘c4 ♗d8 33.e4 ♖d4 34.f3 ♖d7 35.♖a6 ♔f6 36.♘xa5 ♗xa5 37.♖xa5 ♖d4 38.♖b5 e5 39.a5 ♔e6 40.a6 ♖d6 41.a7 ♖a6 42.♖b6+ 1-0, Capablanca-Allies, London 1920.

9.♗d3 dxc4 10.♗xc4 b5 11.♗d3 ♗b7 12.a4 b4



Not a great move. Shashin says a number of interesting things here. First of all, he explains the method for determining 'compactness'.

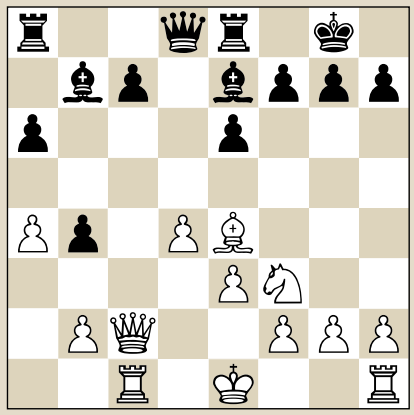
1. Determine the total number of king + pawns on both sides.
2. Then draw the minimal rectangle that can hold each set of kings and pawns.

White has 8 pieces (king + 7 pawns) and his minimal rectangle is a1-a4-h4-h1, which encompasses 32 squares. Black has 8 pieces (king + 7 pawns) and his minimal rectangle is a8-a4-h4-h8, which encompasses 40 squares. 8/32 (White) is greater than 8/40 (Black) which means that White is more compact. What does extra compactness gives you? Shashin makes the wonderful comment that 'White stands a little more compactly. This means that exchanges will definitely favour him. Why? Because the fewer pieces on the board, the more difficult it will be for the weaker side (Black) to protect all of his weaknesses'. So simple, yet it had never consciously occurred to me to approach the problem of exchanges in that way! The more spread out you are over the board the harder it will be to defend your position with fewer pieces. The second point he makes is also funny. He points to the time parameter, which is heavily in White's favour: 47/34 = 1.38, which puts it firmly in the Tal zone. He points out that White's next sequence of moves can be interpreted as Tal (1-move attacks) playing according to the time parameter or as Capablanca (exchanging pieces) playing according to the compactness parameter. He calls this 'algorithmic harmony'!

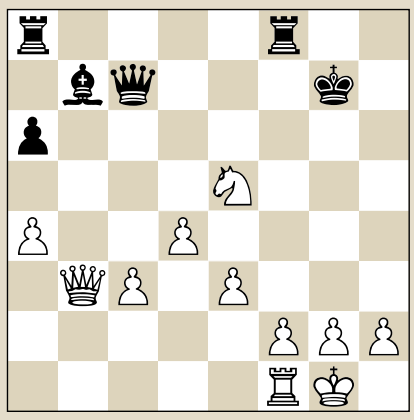
> 'Shashin's contention is that the denser your position (fewer gaps or holes), the more latent energy your position contains and thus the more likely you are to be able to launch an attack.'

Black might consider 12...♗xf3 13.gxf3 c5, sacrificing a pawn but creating big weaknesses in White's position. 14.axb5 cxd4 15.exd4 axb5 16.♘xb5 ♕a5+ should give Black adequate compensation.

13.♗xf6 A 1-move threat. **13...♘xf6 14.♘e4** A 1-move threat against the c7-pawn and a 2-move threat against the h7-pawn (♘xf6+ followed by ♗xh7+). **14...♘xe4 15.♗xe4**



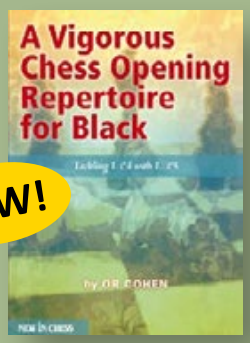
15...♗xe4 A little obliging from Black. I spent quite a while analysing 15...b3 16.♗xh7+ ♔h8 17.♕d3 (17.♕xb3 ♗xf3) 17...g6 18.♗xg6 fxg6 and now not 19.♕xg6, threatening ♘e5, when 19...♗b4+ (19...♗d6 is also possible) 20.♔e2 ♖e7 looks OK for Black, but 19.♘e5 (this gives White the option of taking on g6 both with the queen and with the knight, while b3 can be snaffled by the white queen) 19...♗b4+ (19...♕d5 20.♕xg6 ♖f8 21.f3 (this was the computer's preference. 21.♖xc7 ♕a5+ 22.♖c3 was my analysis. I wasn't at all sure what to make of it! 22...♗b4 23.♕h6+ ♔g8 24.♕xe6+ ♔g7 25.0-0 ♗xc3 26.bxc3 ♕c7 27.♕xb3.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

Never seen a position like this before! I guess if White can play f4 & c4, d5 then he must just be winning, but it's not necessarily easy to get there!) 21...♗d6 22.0-0 ♗xe5 23.♕h5+ ♔g8 24.dxe5 (one of those amazing positions that the computer opens your eyes to! When I reached this in my analysis, I thought that White had at least a draw, but maybe not more than that. The computer says it's just winning) 24...♖f7 25.♖fd1 ♕a5 26.♖c4) 20.♔e2

Some recent NEW IN CHESS books



NEW!

A Vigorous Chess Opening Repertoire for Black

Tackling 1.e4 with 1...e5

Or Cohen

320 pages - €23.95

Finally: the sharp Petroff! With a wealth of fresh and exciting choices for Black. Plus a complete set of powerful hand-grenades if White avoids the Petroff.

"Very interesting and thought-provoking."
Marshtower Chess Reviews

Tactics Time

1001 Chess Tactics from the Real Games of Everyday Chess Players

Tim Brennan & Anthea Carson

144 pages - €14.95

Amateur games are usually won by rather primitive means and rarely require the cool and fancy moves that master need to find in order to win. This book takes positions from real amateur games and puts them out there, warts and all. Extremely instructive for beginners and casual players!

NEW!

NEW!

Steamrolling the Sicilian

Play for a Win with 5.f3!

Sergey Kasparov

240 pages - €23.95

Very difficult to counter for Black!

"The book is light and easy-going."
GM Glenn Flear, Yearbook 109

"Avoid theoretical battles and surprise your opponent! Furthermore, after playing 5.f3 it is almost impossible to end up in a position that is not solid." – *Martin Rieger, SchachWelt*

Sacrifice and Initiative in Chess

Seize the Moment to Get the Advantage

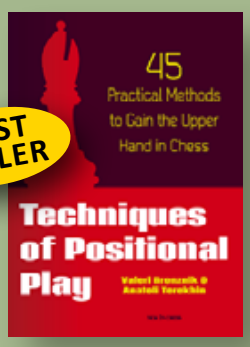
Ivan Sokolov

256 pages - €24.95

"The material which this book contains will make it a classic. Studying it is fun."
German Correspondence Chess Federation

"Once again Sokolov has produced an excellent book that is a pleasure to read."
Joe Petrolito, Australasian Chess Magazine

INSTANT CLASSIC



BEST SELLER

Techniques of Positional Play

45 Practical Methods to Gain the Upper Hand in Chess

Bronznik & Terekhin

254 pages - €24.95

This improved edition of a Russian classic teaches amateur chess players some extremely effective skills in a crystal-clear manner.

"One of the best books on positional play you're ever likely to read." – *Paul Kane, Manchester Chess Federation*

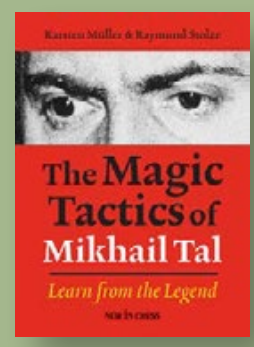
The Magic Tactics of Mikhail Tal

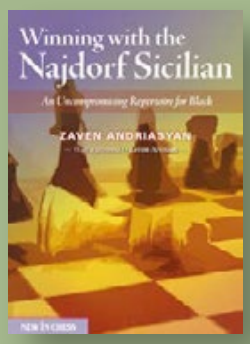
Learn from the Legend

Karsten Müller & Raymund Stolze

334 pages - €24.95

"If you love Tal, you'll love this book. If you love solving puzzles, you'll love this book. If you love chess history, you'll love this book. An instant classic that's suitable for players of all ratings (beginner to grandmaster)."
Jeremy Silman, author of 'How to Reassess Your Chess'





Winning with the Najdorf Sicilian

An Uncompromising Repertoire for Black

Zaven Andriasyan

256 pages - €24.95

"I learned new things not only for Black, which is what you'd expect, but for White too."
Dennis Monokroussos, The Chess Mind

"One of the very best opening books I've ever seen."
Sam Collins, Chess Today

How Magnus Carlsen Became the Youngest Chess Grandmaster

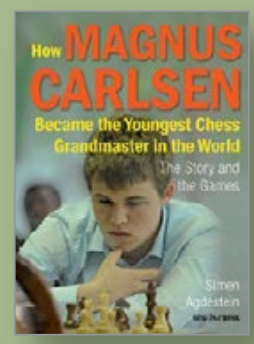
The Story and the Games

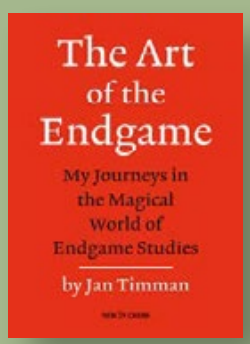
Simen Agdestein

192 pages - €19.95

"A splendid book, accessible for a big audience." – *Herman Grooten, author of 'Chess Strategy for Club Players'*

"Compelling tale, exciting chess."
Jan Timman, former World Chess Championship finalist





The Art of the Endgame

My Journeys in the Magical World of Endgame Studies

Jan Timman

272 pages - €24.95

"A work that succeeds, which entertains and at at the same time makes you better at playing the endgame."
German Correspondence Chess Federation

"Not only a rich manual for the 'studista', but also quite useful for players, with endings to analyze and remember."
Marco Campioli, Torre & Cavallo

The World Champions I Knew

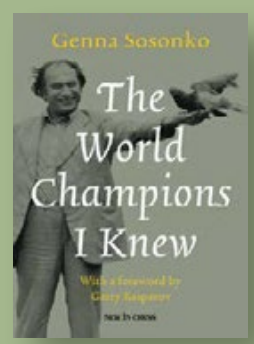
With a foreword by Garry Kasparov

Genna Sosonko

240 pages - €24.95

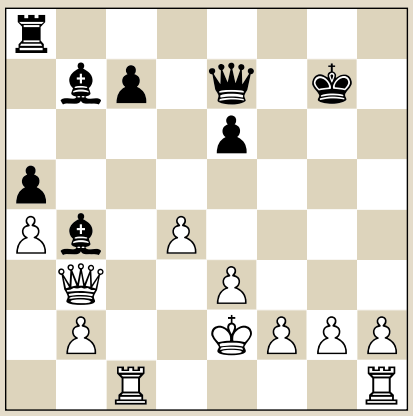
"Sosonko's remiscences of Mikhail Tal, the self-destructive, alcoholic, womanising 'half angel - half devil' form the pulsing heart of his latest memoir."
Dominic Lawson, Standpoint Magazine

"A wonderful insight to the lives of the World Champions."
Gary Lane, Chess Moves Magazine



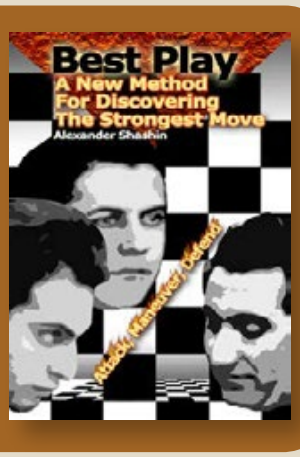
available at your local (chess)bookseller or at www.newinchess.com

♖e7 (20...♕f6 21.♖xc7) 21.♘xg6+ ♔g7 22.♘xe7 ♕xe7 23.♕xb3 a5.



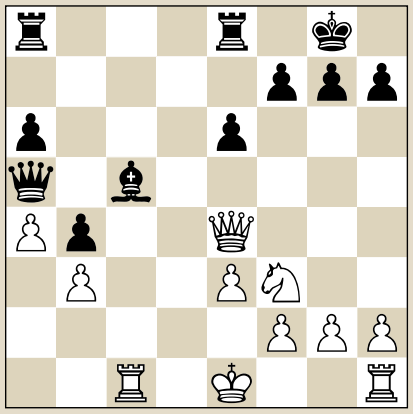
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

I'm not 100% sure about this. I spent a few hours constantly changing my assessment. I do like the pawns but the white king is a little soft.

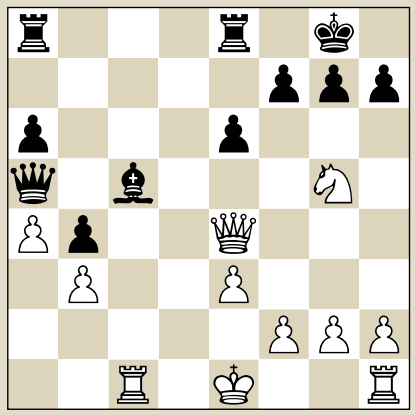


Best Play
A New Method to Find the Strongest Move
by Alexander Shashin
Mongoose Press, 2013

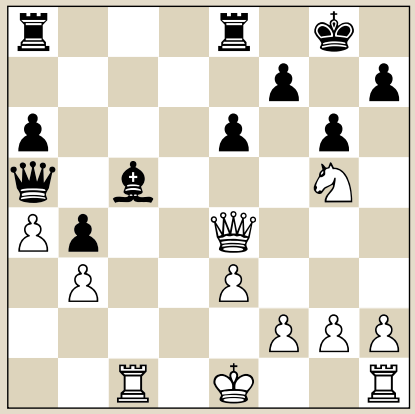
16.♕xe4 c5 17.dxc5 ♕a5 18.b3 ♗xc5



19.♘g5 It seems to be the prelude to a mating attack, but in fact it's a way of forcing the exchange of queens! A move like 19.♔e2, preparing to exchange pieces and to place the knight on e5, also has much to recommend it. Shashin likes 19.♘g5 for the following reason: 'Within the f1-f8-h8-h1 rectangle, the black king faces White's "extra" knight and rook'. Again, I never would have thought of that although I'm a bit sceptical about the real attacking power of the rook on h1!.

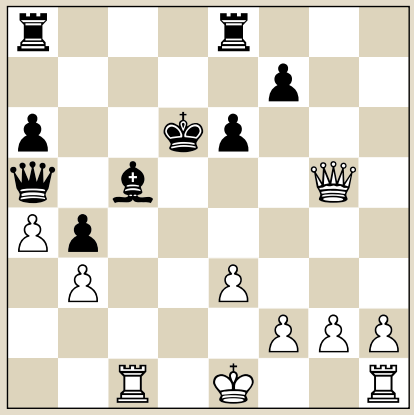


19...h6
19...f5 20.♕c4 ♖ac8 looks sneaky but 21.♘xe6 ♗e7 22.♕xc8 ♖xc8 23.♖xc8+ ♔f7 24.♘d4 looks very good for White.
Influenced by the course of the game, I got quite frustrated analysing the position after 19...g6. I couldn't find a mate for White! I only calmed down once I put it on the computer and found that he wasn't optimistic either!



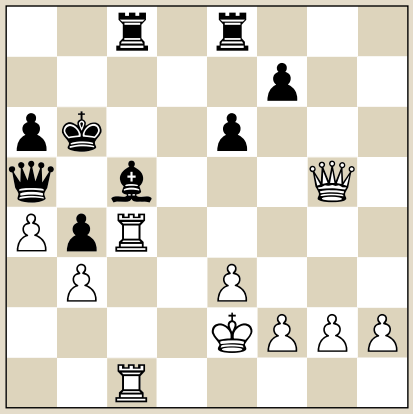
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

A) 20.♕h4 h5
A1) 21.♕f4 ♖f8 (21...♖a7 gives White the opportunity to swap the queens in a favourable position: 22.♕e5 ♗b6 23.♕xa5 ♗xa5 24.♔e2) 22.♕e5 looks the best to me, forcing the exchange of queens after 22...♖ac8 23.♘e4 ♗b6 24.♕xa5 ♖xc1+ 25.♔d2 ♖d8+ 26.♔xc1 ♗xa5;
A2) 21.g4 ♗e7;
A3) 21.♘xf7 ♔xf7 22.♕f4+ ♔g8 23.♕g5 ♗b6 24.♕xg6+ ♔h8 25.♖c6, trying to tie Black down to the defence of the b6-bishop, was an amazing attempt from Rybka to play for the win but it seems that Black has resources (25.♕h6+ draws): 25...♕e5 (25...♖ac8 26.♖xc8 ♖xc8 27.♕h6+ ♔g8 28.♕xe6+) 26.0-0 ♗c5 followed by bringing the bishop to the kingside;
A4) 21.♘e4 ♗e7.
B) 20.♕b7 ♗e7;
C) 20.♕f3 ♖f8 21.♕h3 (21.h4 ♗e7) 21...h5 22.g4 ♗e7 deals easily with White's threats.
20.♕h7+ ♔f8 21.♕h8+
Not the strongest, amazingly enough! 21.♘e4 ♗b6 22.♘d6 ♖ed8 23.0-0 ♕d5 24.♘c8. Wow! This is a fantastic resource pointed out in the Chess Stars book on Capablanca.
21...♔e7 22.♕xg7 hxg5 23.♕xg5+ ♔d6



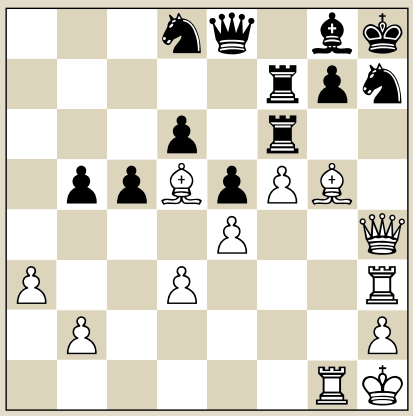
24.♔e2
And now a typical Shashin commentary: 'By improving the king, Capablanca substantially improves the mobility of his pieces (king and rook). [37 before, 43 after – all those extra squares on the 1st rank for the rooks!]. But the chief reason it's an improvement has nothing to do with dynamic considerations. It has to do with a static element: with the text move, White sharply increases his compactness (how densely packed together the king and pawns are) from 7/32 to 7/24. Check it out!' I would beg to differ that the compactness is more important than the fact that White can now involve both his rooks in the game. However, once again, it's a comment that makes you take a slightly different look at the position!
24...♖ac8 25.♖c4 ♔c6 26.♖hc1 ♔b6

Sadler on Books



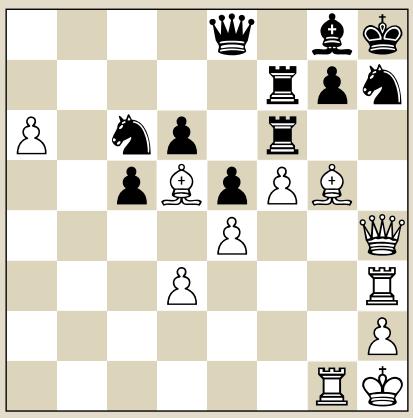
We'll just stop this game here and take a look at the last parameter.

Elevation
Shashin makes the point that Capablanca was obsessed with gaining space and that he was an absolute master in improving his position by gaining territory. The Capablanca game he uses to illustrate this was unknown to me but unforgettable once you see it!



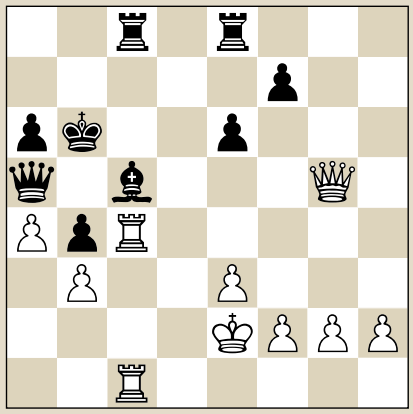
Capablanca-Molina/Ruiz
Buenos Aires consultation 1914

There are many ways for White to finish off the position but Capablanca selects a way that really says something about the way he thought about chess. He improves his position to the utmost by gaining space!
30.b3!! ♕f8 31.a4 bxa4 32.bxa4 ♕e8 33.a5 ♘c6 34.a6



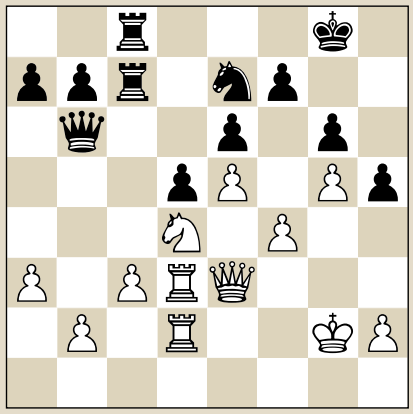
34...♘b4 35.♗xf6 ♘xd5 36.♗xg7+ ♖xg7 37.♖xg7 ♔xg7 38.♕h6+ ♔h8 39.♕xd6 1-0

Going back to Capablanca's game against Schroeder, I think you can guess what Capablanca played...



27.h4 f5 28.♕g7 ♖e7 29.♕e5 ♖c6 30.♖xc5 1-0

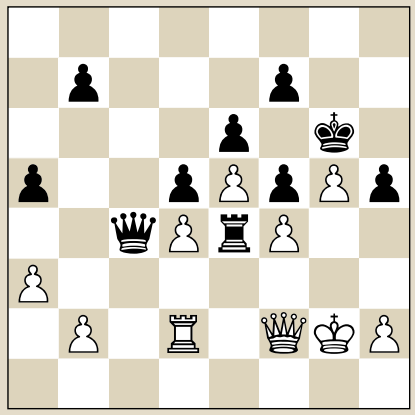
Once you are aware of the two 'weak' parameters, it can be quite a bizarre experience looking through Capablanca's games, in particular his best endgames. You get the feeling that Capablanca's technique was just to pick up his position and shove it forward a few ranks until the opponent was squeezed off the board. Take the final phase of the famous game against Nimzowitsch from New York 1927:



Nimzowitsch-Capablanca
New York 1927 (15)

27...♖c4 28.♕h3 ♔g7 Compactness. **29.♖f2 a5** Elevation. **30.♖e2 ♘f5** Elevation. **31.♘xf5+ gxf5 32.♕f3 ♔g6** Compactness. **33.♖ed2 ♖e4 34.♖d4 ♖c4** Elevation.

35.♕f2 ♕b5 Elevation, even if just a little. **36.♔g3 ♖cxd4 37.cxd4 ♕c4 38.♔g2**



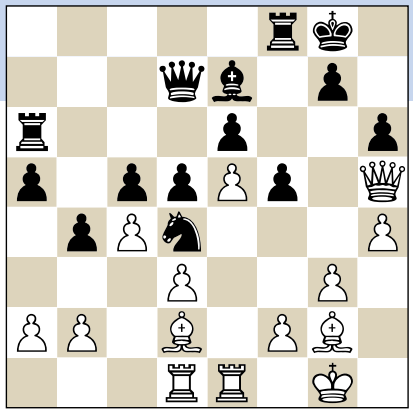
38...b5 Elevation. **39.♔g1 b4** Elevation. **40.axb4 axb4 41.♔g2 ♕c1 42.♔g3 ♕h1 43.♖d3 ♖e1 44.♖f3 ♖d1 45.b3 ♖c1 46.♖e3 ♖f1 0-1**

I can only scratch the surface of this method in a book review, but I think you get the idea of the type of book it is. I fully understand the negative comments about it, but I am personally very glad I came across it. I loved the idea of approaching a position like Capablanca, Tal or Petrosian. If nothing else, it stimulated me to analyse a huge number of their games in the run-up to the London Classic which probably did me more good than any amount of opening analysis would have done. Moreover, although you can argue about the parameters and the way they are calculated, they provide an excellent starting point for thinking about the quality of your position. Counting up how many squares your pieces can move to suddenly draws your attention to an inactive piece in your position. Calculating that your position is low on compactness makes you more alert to the holes and gaps in your position and gets you thinking about how to fill them up (play like Petrosian!). So my advice to those brave souls who fancy trying this book would be: don't try and follow it all literally, but approach it with an open mind. And get studying those Capablanca games too! ■

Yochanan Afek

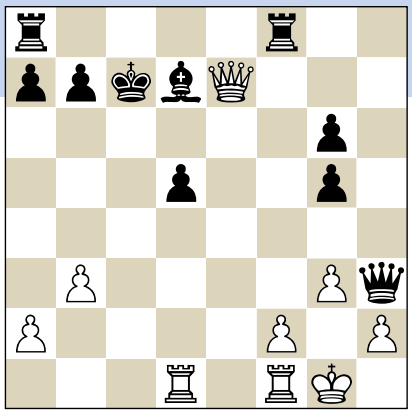
Beware: Brilliancy!

Solutions of page 87



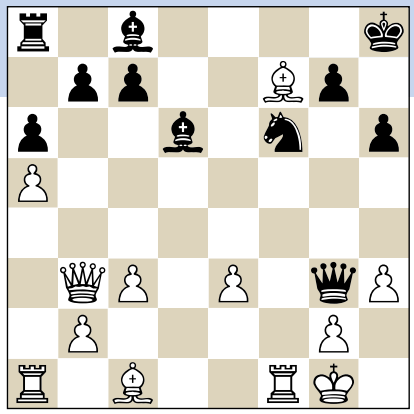
1. Petkov-Sargissian
Warsaw European Teams 2013

23.♕g6! would have pinned two pawns on different lines: 23…♔h8 24.cxd5 followed by 25.d6 gives White a clear advantage.



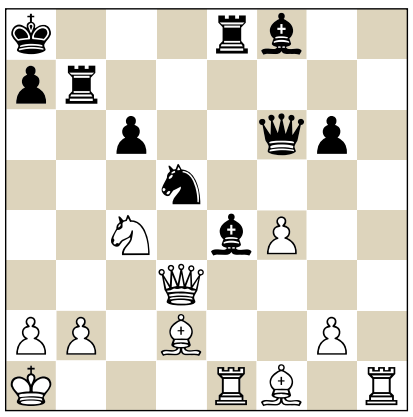
2. Bojkovic-Pähtz
Warsaw European Teams 2013

28.♖xd5! (with the main threat being 29.♖xd7+ ♕xd7 30.♖c1+) 28…♖ad8 29.♕d6+ ♔c8 30.♖c1+ ♗c6 31.♖xc6+! bxc6 32.♕xc6+ ♔b8 33.♖b5 mate.



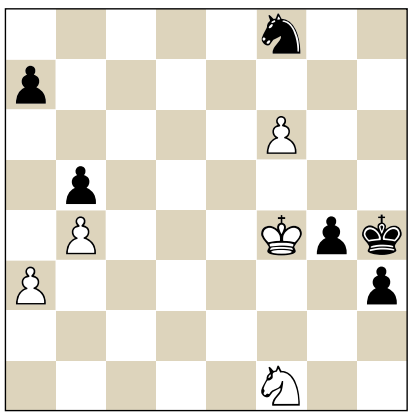
3. Kovalev-Mastrovasilis
Warsaw European Teams 2013

The calm counter-sacrifice 23.♖xf6! gxf6 24.♔f1!! was the only escape, as 24…♗xh3 (24...♗f5 25.♕d5) would have been efficiently met by 25.♕xb7! ♖f8 26.♗d5, comfortably holding.



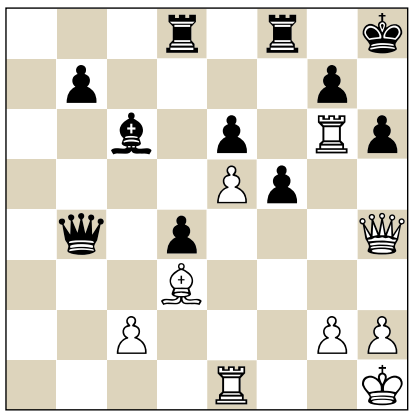
4. Tate-Blagojevic
Warsaw European Teams 2013

Way more sophisticated was to postpone capturing the queen by 29...♖xb2! 30.♘xb2 ♖b8 31.♕b3 (31.♗c1 ♗xd3 32.♗xd3 ♗a3 33.♖e2 ♘xf4 and wins) 31...♖xb3 32.axb3 ♗g7 33.♗c1 ♕c3 and wins.



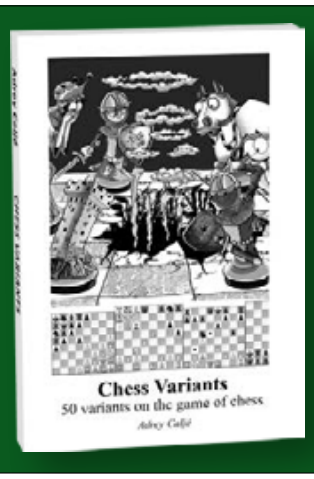
5. Batkovskyte-Sikorova
Warsaw European Teams 2013

White could have steered the position to reciprocal zugzwang with White to play with 56...♘g6+ 57.♔f5 ♘h8!! 58.♔f4 a6! (zugzwang, White to play!) 59. ♘h2 ♘g6+ 60.♔f5 g3 61.♔xg6 gxh2 62.f7 h1♕ 63.f8♕ ♕e4+ 64.♔h6 h2 and wins. (56...a6 fails to 57.f7!=.)



6. Tari-Pelletier
Warsaw European Teams 2013

Black missed an incredible chase of the enemy rook by 26...♔h7!! 27.♖xe6 ♗d5 28.♖e7 (28.♖d6 ♖xd6 29.exd6 ♕xd6) 28...♔g8!! (threatening 29…g5!) 29.♖c7 ♕a5 30.e6 (30.♖e7 ♕c5 31.e6 g5) 30...♕xc7 31.e7 f4 32.exf8♕+ ♖xf8 and when the smoke has cleared, Black is two pawns up.



CHESS VARIANTS

From Alice Chess to Ultima, from historical variants to popular present-day ones, this book presents 50 entertaining variants on the game of chess.

paperback • 196 pages • € 19.95 • available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com

Jan Timman

Twenty Years On

In the last days of 2013, Karpov and I played a short match in Groningen, the city where, 46 years ago, we first played one another as 16-year-olds. The four-game match was one of the events to mark the Year of Friendship between Russia and the Netherlands; the fact that these two countries had traded with one another for 400 years called for celebrations. There were a few hitches. In early October, a drunk Russian diplomat was arrested in The Hague on suspicion of cruelty to his children. Not long afterwards, a Dutch diplomat in Moscow was beaten up in revenge. These events were in stark contrast to the peaceful atmosphere in which Karpov and I played our games in the Groningen Museum.

The short match was part of the annual Groningen Chess Festival, and as Karpov and I took part in various side events, we played some kind of upgraded rapid chess: 40 minutes per player plus a 30-second increment for each move. One of those side events was a panel discussion about the 1993 World Championship match, chaired by Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam. For that reason I decided to brush up on the trials and tribulations surrounding the World Championship of over 20 years ago.

These days, the only top players with any ambitions within FIDE are Kasparov and Short, both of whom have severely criticized the incumbent President, Ilyumzhinov. Yet it was their actions at the time that indirectly helped Ilyumzhinov into the saddle in 1993. FIDE was pretty strapped for cash in those days, and organizing the World Championship match normally generated some much-needed income. So when Kasparov and Short decided to play their match outside the aegis of FIDE, the FIDE board were in a terrible tizzy.

I must say I was rather surprised about 'The Hijack of the World Championship', to quote the title of Hartston's match book, because it was the first time that top players had had so much say in everything concerning the World Championship. Towards the end of 1989, FIDE and the GMA had signed a historical agreement in Lucerne, which stipulated that from that moment on, the World Championship would be under the umbrella of both organizations, with any revenues to be shared equally. Until that time, FIDE had claimed 20 per cent of the prize-fund; from 1989 on, each organization would get 10 per cent. It was also decided to set up an 'Experts Commission', which would be responsible for all matters concerning the World Championship. The commission would be made up of the World Champion, two FIDE representatives and two GMA representatives. Decisions were to be taken on a consensual basis, so that nothing could be done without the express approval of the players. If the Experts Commission had still been around now, the bizarre 'zero-tolerance rule' would not have had a hope.

> 'Campomanes didn't bat an eyelid. He didn't give a fig about his reputation.'

The idea of breaking with FIDE was Short's initiative. When he had beaten me in the last Candidates' match, there was little enthusiasm in England for organizing the World Championship match, but the region of Short's birth declared itself prepared to try and raise a hefty prize-fund for the match between Kasparov and his challenger. Representatives of the city of Manchester had promised the challenger that they would raise a prize-fund of three million British pounds, but they ended up with only half that sum. In his book, Hartston explains that this drastic reduction was the result of a piece of FIDE clumsiness. FIDE had set a deadline for offers to host the championship that did not give Manchester enough time to finalize their bid, so when the envelopes were opened in the FIDE offices, there turned out to be only one reasonable bid. Santiago de Compostella offered the minimum prize-fund of one million Swiss francs. Because of some snags with the bank guarantee, however, a new deadline had to be set. But now the Mancunians knew how much the match was worth and duly lowered their bid. If FIDE had immediately set a longer deadline, their bid would have been much higher. This is a plausible enough explanation, but Short saw things differently. He suspected FIDE President Campomanes of having received money under the counter from the Manchester representatives.

This was a pretty stupid accusation. Of course, Campomanes would have been very happy to accept such a bribe, but he was dealing with unimpeachable Englishmen. Besides, there could not have been any money under the counter, since the Manchester bid had been the only one made completely in accordance with the rules. It was interesting to see Campomanes's reaction to Short's allegation. Other presidents of important sports organizations would have been furious, but Campomanes didn't bat an eyelid. He didn't give a fig about his reputation. He also had other problems to contend with. The FIDE regulations obliged him to organize an official match in very short order, and Campomanes intended to go down fighting. He stated that he would provide a bigger prize-fund than the one for the match in London. This was hardly realistic, especially because the man rarely heeded good advice.

A telling omen. At the opening ceremony of the Karpov-Timman FIDE World Championship the match banner caught fire.

Century-old chess pieces

FIDE set an official deadline for the new bids, but this failed to yield anything. So they had to improvise. Karpov and me also did our best. We composed a 'letter of support' for the French town of Belfort, which had organized the second World Cup tournament five years before. Both Karpov and I were members of the Belfort chess club, led by the enterprising Frenchman Jean Paul Touzé. We suggested that one leg of the match be held in the French town. During the panel forum in Groningen, Karpov observed that Belfort was such a rich and chess-minded town in those days that they could even have hosted the entire event. The problem, however, was that Campomanes and Touzé had absolutely no time for each other, so even when the Belfort bid got the support of Bessel Kok, Campomanes would have none of it.

In early May, more than six weeks after the break-away, there appeared some light at the end of the tunnel. In the Oman desert, centuries-old chess pieces had been found. For this reason it was proposed to stage the second leg of the match in Oman. The initial budget for prize-fund and expenses was one million dollars, which Campomanes, in additional negotiations, managed to increase to two million Swiss francs only for the prize-fund. In the middle of May, these conditions were confirmed in a letter from the Oman Minister of Youth and Culture.

The chess world reacted with a mixture of surprise and disbelief. The supporters of the PCA, established by Kasparov and Short, were particularly sceptical about the existence of a guarantee for those two million francs. Many of those supporters were Dutch, and most Dutch chess journalists took every chance they got to bemoan the fact that Karpov and I were going to play for the official world title. One of them even suggested that Campomanes had buried those chess pieces in the Oman desert himself. Funnily enough, this would really have been possible, since the pieces had been found at a depth of only eight inches beneath the desert sand. Nor had they been found recently, as people generally assumed at the time. The archeologists had already discovered them on the second day of the excavation of the legendary desert city of Ubar. The story of the discovery of Ubar is a fascinating one, and the chess world has never given the discovery of those chess pieces the attention it deserves.

According to the tradition, Ubar was established by a grandson of Noah's. Historians think that this must have happened around 2800 B.C. In Ptolomaeus's atlas, Ubar is called Emporium Omanum. That seemed to suggest that the legendary city had been in present-day Oman. Very little was known about Ubar. Again according to the tradition, it must have been the site of mysterious rituals. H.P. Lovecraft based his short stories 'The Nameless City' and 'The call of Cthulhu' on these beliefs. In the Quran, the city is referred to as Iram, which means 'city of towers'. But in Mohammed's time, the city had already ceased to exist. Ubar must have disappeared around 500 A.D. It had been built on top of a water basin, and one earthquake was enough to destroy it.

In the first half of the 20th century, expeditions were launched to rediscover the city. The explorer Bertram Thomas was told by Bedouins about the lost city with its wicked inhabitants that God had punished. Ubar was supposed to be in the 'Empty Quarter' of Oman. The expedition on camel-back failed to yield anything. The area was

Jan Timman

too big. Thomas told his story to Lawrence of Arabia, who dubbed the city 'The Atlantis of the Sands'. After World War II there were some more attempts to find Ubar, but it took until six decades after Thomas's venture for them to be successful. A crucial member of the successful expedition was Sir Ranulph Fiennes. Fiennes is an adventurer and explorer who has led more than 30 expeditions. He had fought in the army of the old Sultan of Oman in its defeat by the Sultan's son. Fiennes also managed to get on good terms with the new Sultan, who granted him permission to travel to the Empty Quarter with a camera crew and a team of archeologists. This was quite a feat, for during the 1980s, Oman kept its borders virtually closed.

In February 1992, *The New York Times* ran a long article on the discovery of Ubar. NASA's satellite pictures had allegedly shown where the caravan tracks in the desert converged. After that, all the archeologists had to do was start digging. Fiennes strenuously denies this version of events. According to him, Ubar was discovered through 'sheer luck'. The archeologists did know roughly where to dig, because there are very few oases in the desert, but the area remained very large and they had nothing else to go by. The satellite pictures had not pinpointed an exact location. In early December, two government officials visited the dig to find out what was happening. They found archeologists and a camera crew that seemed to be just hanging around doing nothing. Fiennes heard the officials deliberating in Arabic, and it hardly sounded encouraging. The two men came to the conclusion that nothing was going on, and Fiennes realized that the entire team of archeologists and cameramen would be turfed out of the country if the Sultan got wind of this. So he decided to take action. He suggested to one of the archeologists that he start digging some 300 metres further on, where there was some debris lying around. The archeologist reluctantly agreed, knowing that the debris was from a fort of only a few hundred years old. But OK, something had to be done, and it seemed like a good opportunity to give his field workers a chance to garner some experience. This was how Ubar was discovered. Spread around the fort, remains were found of a city that must have had at least eight towers. They also found seven chess pieces: a king with a star on his head, a queen, a rook, a knight and three pawns.

Besides an adventurer and an explorer, Fiennes was also a bit of a liar. In 2001, he told the magazine *January* that the chess pieces they had found were 2,500 years old. Ten years later, he even went one better, telling CNN that the pieces were 3,000 years old – a gain of half a millennium in the space of a decade!

The chess pieces had been carved out of sandstone, a material rarely used

in that region. As regards their form, they belonged to the 'Mozarabic chess pieces', four ivory pieces of this type having been found in the Mozarabic monastery in Leon. In addition, another eight wooden chess pieces in the Mozarabic style were found by divers in an 11th-century wreck off the coast of Turkey. The archeologists surmise that the Ubar pieces must have been fashioned in the 10th or 11th century, well after the demise of the city. How is this possible? In an earlier publication, I suggested that Ubar must have been destroyed at a later date, but this theory is untenable. Archeologists have provided a different explanation. After the destruction of Ubar the inhabitants joined other tribes, and sometimes, when travelling on their camels, they would halt in places where the animals could be watered. While waiting, they would have played this fairly recently invented game – not exactly a satisfactory explanation, because the men must have taken the pieces with them, so why would they leave that beautiful material in that forbidding place? A more plausible interpretation seems to me that the game was played while the old fort was still standing.

Quit claim

However this may be, it turned out that the spectacular find was still regarded as such a prestigious event that it was reason to have one leg of a World Championship match in Oman. In early June, a prominent Oman newspaper published an article with the headline: 'Oman to host Karpov-Timman match'. The idea was to exhibit the pieces during the match, while Karpov and I played in a suite in the Al-Bustan Palace Hotel for a very select audience: only the Sultan and his closest relatives would be allowed to attend.

There still remained the first leg to be organized. Campomanes was planning to approach the Dutch chess federation. I did all I could to dissuade him, because it seemed to me that he wouldn't have a hope – the extremely negative press would deter any potential sponsor. I spun Campomanes a long argument; granted that he wouldn't accept the Belfort bid, what about the possibility of restricting our match to 12 games and have them all in Oman, which was offering a bigger prize-fund than London? But the FIDE President wouldn't budge and travelled to Holland. The Dutch organizing committee worked on the basis of a Quit Claim, which means that an organization agrees to look for sponsors, but without any legal obligation to actually raise the money. I could have predicted the outcome: they failed to come up with a single penny of prize money. They had raised the money for the expenses, to wit 1,300,000 guilders. So why could they not put some of this money into the prize-fund? I felt the same negative vibe as in the Dutch press: Karpov and I should count ourselves lucky that we had money waiting for us in Oman. And this was precisely what the chairman of the organizing committee – whose name I wish I could forget – suggested during a press conference immediately before the match. Forget the prize-fund for the first leg; there was a prize-fund for the entire match, viz. two million Swiss francs. These contemptuous words spelled a message that anyone with half a brain would understand: Oman was over and done with. If the country of one of the main protagonists, where chess was highly respected, couldn't cough up the money, what chance was there in a country with no chess tradition at all?

> 'Two years later, when Ilyumzhinov was elected FIDE President in Paris, a remarkable thing happened: Campomanes and his henchmen robbed the FIDE coffers.'

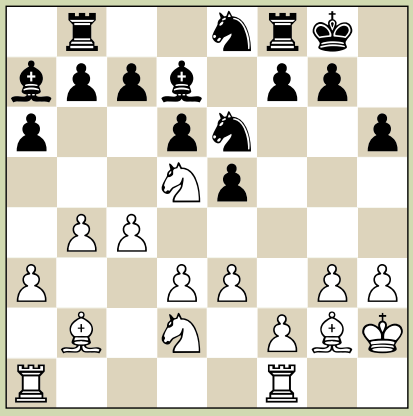
Later we found out that Oman had already become a non-option some time before. At the end of August, Campomanes sent a letter to that same Minister of Youth and Culture who had given him an unconditional undertaking earlier. The contents of the letter were bewildering. Campomanes suggested that FIDE would take it upon itself to raise the prize-fund. He clearly wanted to indemnify the Oman Minister for the consequences of his earlier promises. But what had happened in the two months prior to the letter? Campomanes himself has never said a word about it, but it seems that he had 'forgotten' to tell the Minister about the alternative match in London.

At the very last moment, Campomanes officially declared that Oman was off the agenda, but he continued his poker game, apparently hopeful of a miracle. Just before Game 11, which was played in Amsterdam, the news came through. I started playing, but realized after a few moves that it was impossible to concentrate. After my 11th move I offered a draw, which Karpov immediately accepted. After Game 12 had also finished in a draw, the negotiations with FIDE started in the Grand Hotel in Amsterdam. It soon became clear that the second leg would be played in Jakarta, but the Indonesians were not going to contribute to the prize-fund. They left that to the FIDE board themselves. The amount was 800,000 Swiss francs and neither FIDE nor the GMA would claim their percentages. It was still a lot of money, and there were no millionaires on the FIDE board. At some stage, Makropoulos approached me and asked if I would settle for 600,000. I refused. The remaining 200,000 would also have to be found. Eventually, Campomanes and his associates managed to scrape the money together, and when all documents had been signed, Karpov and I felt we would be able to travel to Jakarta with confidence.

Jan Timman

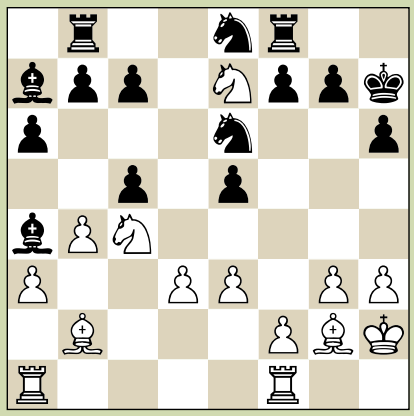
Meanwhile, FIDE was facing a financial crisis. The World Championship had cost them money instead of bringing it in. Campomanes's days were numbered. Two years later, when Ilyumzhinov was elected FIDE President in Paris, a remarkable thing happened: Campomanes and his henchmen robbed the FIDE coffers. Campomanes himself appropriated 300,000 Swiss francs, while the other board members settled for clearly smaller amounts. This made me think, and after a while I understood what had been going on. Campomanes had had to fork out the money in Amsterdam himself, with the rest contributing smaller amounts to the prize-fund. From that time on, the new FIDE President would personally see to it that the FIDE coffers remained full. In this respect, Ilyumzhinov has fully discharged his obligation.

Here is a nice fragment from the match.

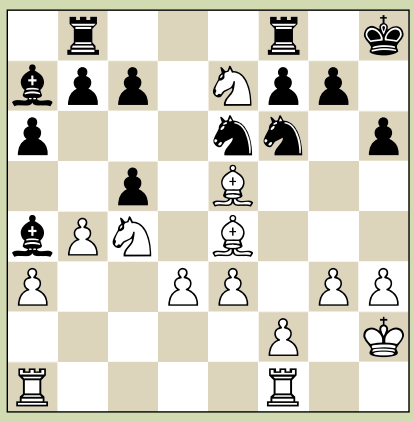


Timman-Karpov
Arnhem 5th match game 1993
position after 17...♘e6

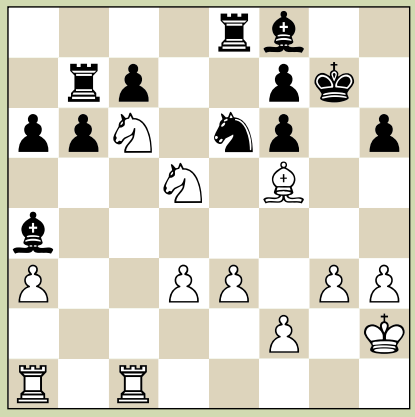
In this queenless middlegame White's minor pieces are marginally more active. I now launched a sharp attack.
18.♘e7+! A somewhat surprising check. The knight penetrates enemy territory in order to harass the black king. **18...♔h7 19.c5!**
A temporary pawn sac to break open the position.
19...dxc5 20.♘c4 ♗a4
Karpov used a lot of time here. He wanted to put his minor pieces on the best possible squares.



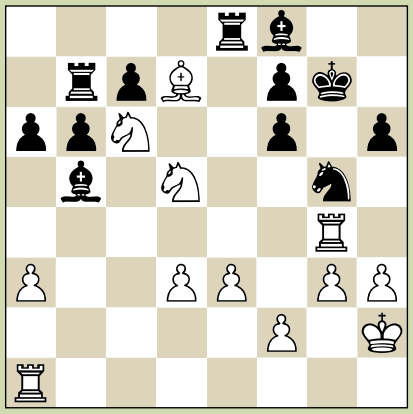
21.♗e4+ ♔h8 22.♗xe5
In this situation, taking with the bishop is White's best option.
22...♘f6
There's nothing for it. Black has to try to free himself.



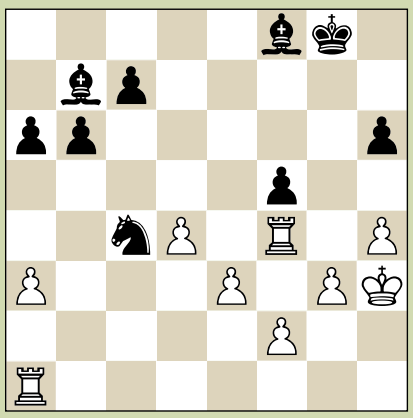
23.♗f5
Here I allowed myself to be carried away by the idea that I could increase my pressure on the black position still further. Instead, it was time for simple and straightforward positional play. With 23.♗xf6! gxf6 24.h4! White could have secured a large and winning strategic advantage. The white knight takes up a dominant position on f5.
This was a crucial moment in the match. It was 2-2, and a win would have given me the lead.
23...♖fe8 24.♗xf6 gxf6 25.♘d5 ♔g7 26.bxc5 ♗xc5 27.♖fc1 ♗f8 28.♘a5
Black is still under great pressure. He is forced to weaken his queenside.
28...b6 29.♘c6 ♖b7
The rook seems to be offside here, but Karpov has calculated sharply that this is a strictly temporary problem.



30.♖c4
The fight is getting sharper.
30...♗b5 31.♖g4+ ♘g5 32.♗d7
White seems to be winning, but Black has another resource.

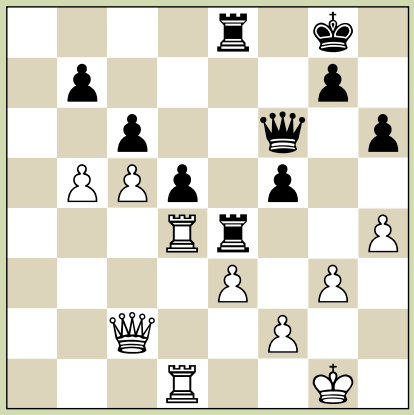


32...♖e6! Karpov had less than a minute left, but he is conducting a phenomenal defence.
33.♗xe6 ♗xc6 The point of the previous move. White will be unable to maintain his material plus.
34.♘f4 fxe6 35.♘xe6+ ♔g8 36.♘d8 ♗f3 37.♘xb7 ♗xb7 38.h4 f5 39.♖f4 ♘f3+ 40.♔h3 ♘e5 41.d4 ♘c4 We have made the time-control. Black, with his three strong pieces, has nothing to fear.



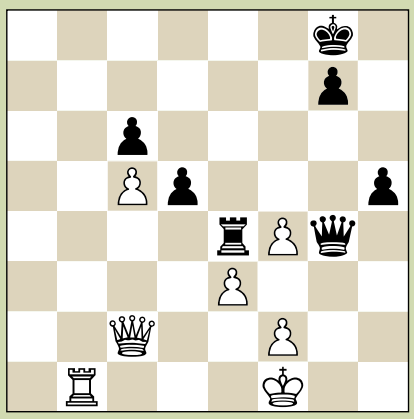
42.a4 ♗c8 43.♖c1 b5 44.axb5 axb5 45.d5 ♗d6 46.♖fxc4
Settling for the draw.
About this fragment, Hartston wrote: 'This was a wonderful scrap, with Timman playing a beautiful strategic pawn sacrifice to secure a large advantage, and Karpov scrambling to safety thanks to a brilliantly bewildering tactical sequence that never seemed to end.'
46...bxc4 47.♖xc4 ♔f7 48.♔g2 ♔e7 49.f3 h5 50.♔f2 ♗b7 51.♖d4 ♗c5 52.♖f4 ♗c8 53.♖a4 ♗b7 54.♖f4 ♗c8 55.♖a4
Draw.

In Groningen, Karpov and I played in the presence of famous masterpieces by Monet, Sisley and Boudin. Karpov won the match 2½-1½. Here is a fragment from the second game.

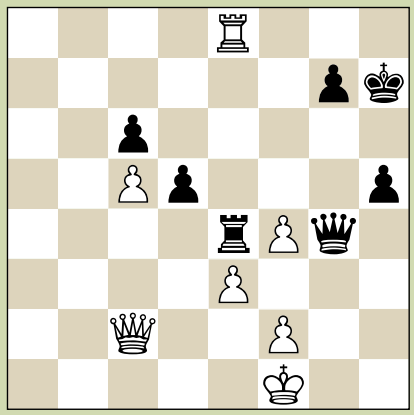


Karpov-Timman
Groningen 2nd match game 2013
position after 31... ♖de8

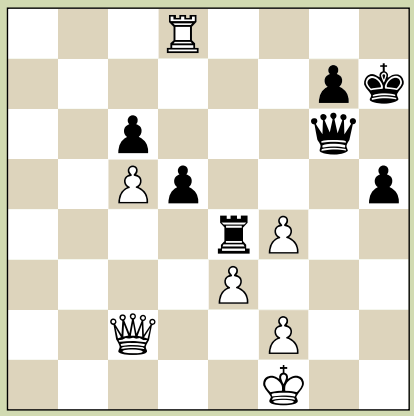
The position is equal, but White's next move is incautious.
32.♔g2? f4!
Suddenly, White is in trouble. After 33.♖xe4 Black has the intermediate check 33...f3+, with a large advantage.
33.gxf4
Forced; but now the white king starts feeling the draught.
33...♕xh4 34.bxc6 bxc6 35.♖xe4 ♖xe4 36.♖b1 ♕g4+ 37.♔f1 ♕h3+ 38.♔e2 ♕h5+ 39.♔f1 ♕h3+ 40.♔e2 ♕g4+ 41.♔f1 h5
After a few repetitions I decided to go for a win, firmly reminding myself of the following: with the white rook on the eighth rank and my king on h7 I must not put my queen on g6 in view of f3. Unfortunately, my good intentions were soon forgotten.



42.♖b8+ The computer indicates that 42.♖b6 leads to equality, since White will be able to meet 42...h4 with 43.♕e2 ♕g6 44.♕f3. But over the board and with little time on the clock this was hard to see.
42...♔h7 43.♖e8



43...♕g6?
A step in the wrong direction. Strong was 43...♕f5!, with the threat of 44...♖xf4 and liquidation to a very promising rook ending. White cannot really prevent this, since the pawn ending after 44.♖xe4 ♕xe4 45.♕xe4+ dxe4 46.♔g2 ♔g6 is winning for Black.
44.♖d8



44...h4??
And this is an out-and-out blunder.
45.♖d6??
With less than a minute on the clock, Karpov returns the favour. After 45.f3 Black could have resigned, as 45...♖e7 runs into 46.♖a8+ and 45...♖e8 loses material after 46.♕xg6+.
45...♕f5 46.♕d1 ♖e6
Only 46...♖c4 would have kept Black's chances alive. Now it's a draw.
47.♖xe6 ♕xe6 48.♕h5+ ♕h6 49.♕g4 ♕f6 50.♔g2 ♕e7 51.f5 ♕xc5 52.♕g6+ ♔g8 53.♕e6+ ♔h7 54.♕g6+ ♔g8 55.♕e6+ ♔h7
Draw. ■

Daniel King

CURRENT ELO: Do I still have one?
DATE OF BIRTH: August 28, 1963
PLACE OF BIRTH: London, UK
PLACE OF RESIDENCE: London, UK

What is your favourite colour?
Blue. Deep blue.

What kind of food makes you happy?
Indian.

And what drink?
Tea.

Who is your favourite author?
P.G. Wodehouse.

What was the best book you ever read?
Revolution in the Head by Ian McDonald. A critical analysis of every recording The Beatles made, putting the songs in the cultural and social context of the time.

What is your all-time favourite movie?
The Sure Thing makes me laugh every time.

What is your favourite TV series?
The Wire.

Do you have a favourite actor?
Clint Eastwood; more currently Idris Elba.

And a favourite actress?
Cate Blanchett.

What music do you like to listen to?
Everything and anything from Classical to Punk. At the moment I am playing in guitar-based jazz and blues bands so I'm listening to Django Reinhardt and 50s R'n'B artists like T-Bone Walker.

Do you have a favourite artist?
No. But art gives me great pleasure. Modernism appeals particularly.

What is your best result ever?
My victory over Dolmatov, Reykjavik 1990. A poor game, but I believe it's the only occasion England defeated the USSR.

What was the best game you ever played?
I'm not sure about 'best' but I like the poetry of the kings and queens in King-A. Sokolov, Swiss team championship, 2000.

Who is your favourite chess player of all time?
Tal. 'A name like a gun-shot'.

Is there a chess book that had a profound influence on you?
Probably the first I ever read: *The Game of Chess* by Harry Golombek.

What was the most exciting chess game you ever saw?
As a commentator I've witnessed many great games, but Kramnik-Kasparov, Game 4, World Championship 2000, sticks in my mind. Garry held the ending by the skin of his teeth and at the end the crowd was in awe of both players.

What is the best chess country?
Switzerland. The tournaments are well organised and I have always been treated with great hospitality and friendliness.

What is it that you appreciate most in a person?
Friendliness and discretion. I must admit, a difficult mix to get right.

What is it that you dislike in a person?
Bullshit.

Who or what would you like to be if you weren't yourself?
A musician. I'm working on it.

What is the best piece of advice you were ever given?
'It takes 25 years to become an overnight success'.

Is there something you'd love to learn?
I would like to find time to study languages.

Where is your favourite place in the world?
I like cities, e.g. London, Paris, Barcelona, New York. In all these places I picture myself having a long café lunch, watching the world go by.

What would you save from your house if it were on fire?
Assuming the wife, kids and cat were safe – then my double bass. A beautiful but cumbersome instrument, and I fear a tragic end.

How do you relax?
Sitting at the piano or playing the guitar.

What is the stupidest rule in chess?
The zero tolerance rule.

What will be the nationality of the 2050 chess world champion?
Chinese? American?? I give up. Tell me.

Is a knowledge of chess useful in everyday life?
Yes, I believe so. Personally, situations I have encountered in chess games often provide a model for decision-making in real life.

What is the best thing that was ever said about chess?
'My head is filled with sunshine' – Tal after winning the Candidates' in 1959.

“The Dutch Defence is a diamond in the treasure box of modern chess openings.”

– Viktor Moskalenko

Viktor Moskalenko shakes up the lines of yet another opening! Keeping both the strategic principles and the tactical finesses firmly in sight, he presents a host of novelties, daring recommendations, new resources and cunning tricks.

Paperback ♦ 272 pages ♦ € 26.95 ♦ available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com ♦ a NEW IN CHESS publication

Chess at ICC universal
Pure iOS7

The brand new ICC app.
Clean, brilliant & smart.

Download on the App Store

ICC
Internet Chess Club

www.chessclub.com